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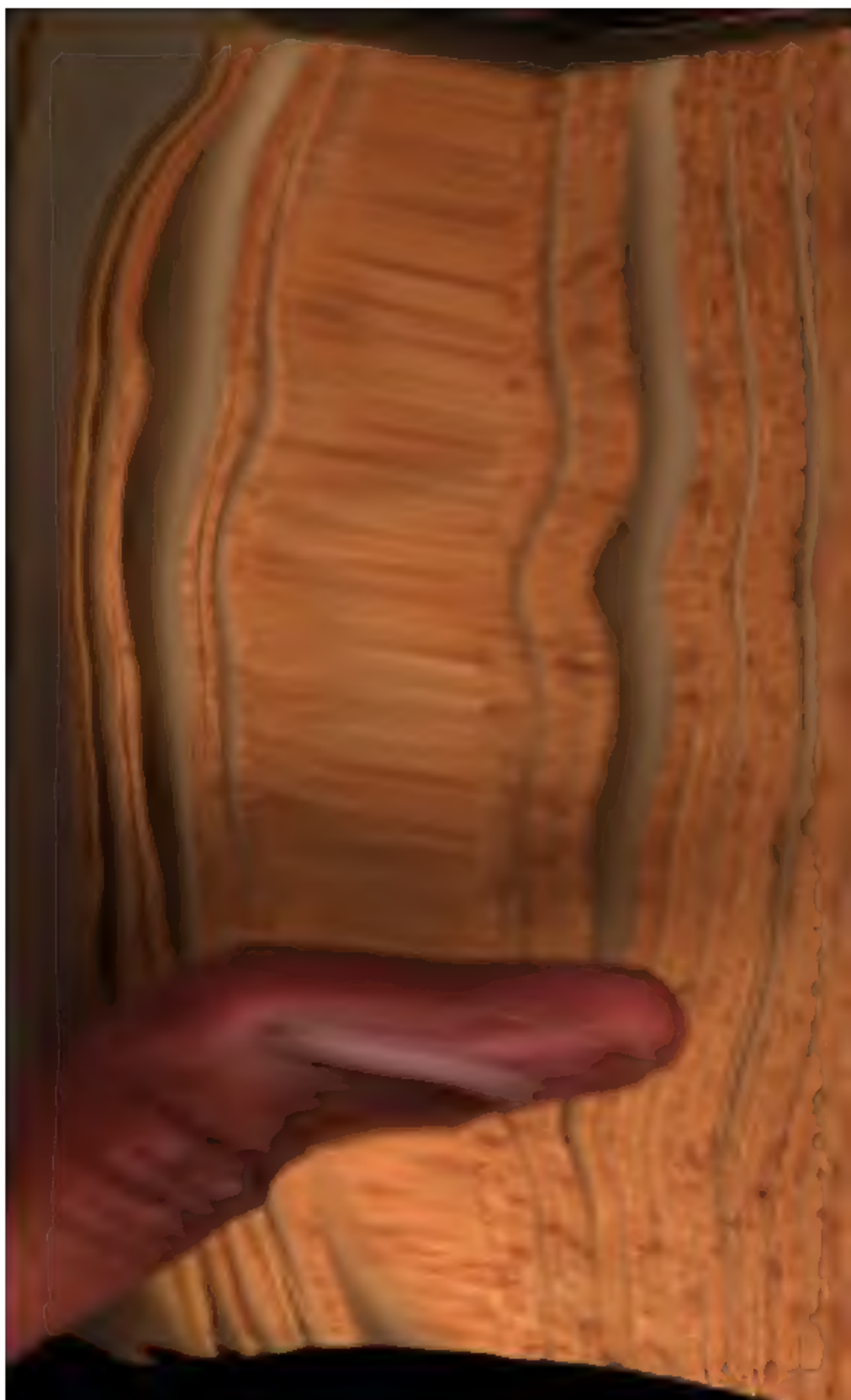
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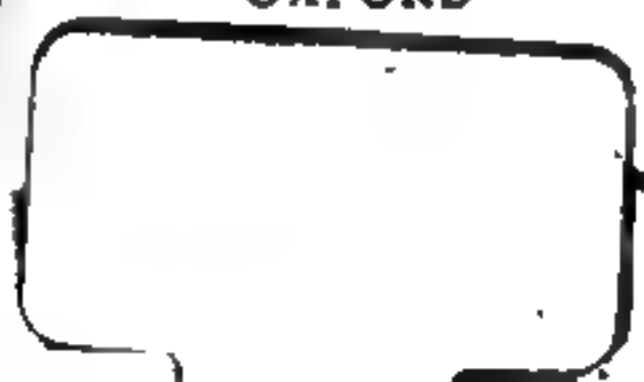


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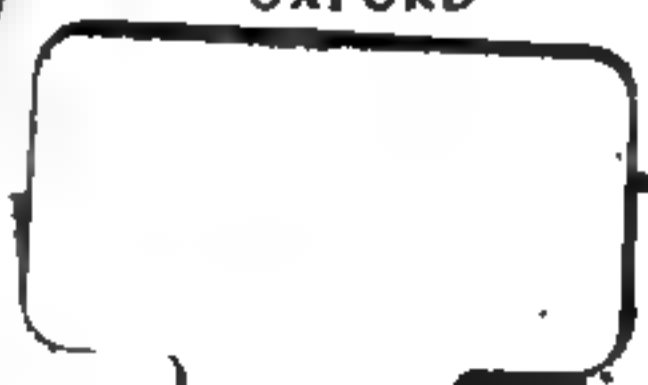


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MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

VOL. I.

LONDON
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.

MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

S.A. 1027.

BEING

SELECTIONS FROM THE PAPERS

OF

A MAN OF THE WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF GILBERT EARLE.

I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing—
But, och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CHARLES KNIGHT,
PALL-MALL EAST.

1826.

/o.



INTRODUCTION.

THE papers, from which the following pages are selections, were put into my hands, not long ago, with a request that I would arrange and fit them for publication. They consisted, as at present, of a considerable body of letters and journals. I believe that it was originally wished that I should found on these a narrative, or Memoir, of Mr. Blount's Life. But I represented that the materials themselves would answer the purpose far better than any work which could be composed from them;—as they contain

a delineation of his character and habits of thought, drawn by his own hand—unconsciously, indeed—but, for that very reason, with greater truth.

I have, therefore, confined myself to the task of selection, here and there appending a note, where I thought explanation needed. I am also answerable for the mottoes prefixed to each extract.

Mr. Blount seems to have kept up a singularly close and constant correspondence with the friend to whom the letters are addressed. His intimacy with this gentleman appears to have been of a nature peculiarly confidential and unreserved. Indeed, it is often difficult to trace any difference between the tone of the letters and of the private journals. These journals, as I gather, took their origin from being kept, at first, while Mr. Blount was on the Con-

minent; and, afterwards, were continued from the force of habit. Some parts of them, however, have not the same appearance of being written solely for his own eye. In places, they would almost seem to have been the first sketch towards publication; a story or two, here and there, being more at length than is usual for a merely private purpose. It is certain, however, that even if my supposition be correct, the sketch is merely the first rough one; for no where do I trace any marks of revision, or any attempts at elaborate writing.

The reader will find the following sketches exactly in the state in which they are in Mr. Blount's MSS., with the exception only of some trifling verbal corrections: but he is not to suppose that *all* the letters and journals are here published. I have selected only such as I thought illustrative of the

writer, and of human character and passion more generally. There is little, however, in the portion (and it is a large one) written on the Continent, in the nature of what is usually understood by the term "Travels;"—no mere description of places—no catalogue of churches, antiquities, and objects of art. The original deals but very sparingly in these matters; my selections, with the exception of the few pages relating to the Rhine, not at all. I have chosen such scenes and adventures as bore upon the course of the writer's fortunes, from which, as it appears to me, a moral lesson of some usefulness may be drawn. I shall now leave him to speak for himself.

MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

EXTRACT I.

“ Beauty clear and fair,
Where the air
Rather like a perfume dwells ;
Where the violet and the rose
Their blue veins in blush disclose,
And come to honour nothing else.
Where, to live near
And plantèd there,
Is to live, and still live new ——”

BEAUMONT & FLETCHER.

Tours, September, 1788.

WHAT do I here so long? say you?—
What do I here, for six weeks, at a country town in France, where I ought only to have changed horses, or at most, to have slept

a night, on my road to Paris?—Do you, dear Frewin, ask me such questions as these, at this time of day?—I thought you might have answered yourself. Why, what *could* keep me at such a place beyond four-and-twenty hours, but—a woman?—Ay, and such a woman!—But I will be the ram in Antoine Hamilton's Fairy-Tale; and begin at the beginning.

That which caused me to stay here four-and-twenty hours at all, was, not a woman, but a broken axletree. Blessings on Dessin's rotten carriages!—If mine had stood firm, I should have rolled on the next morning after my arrival, and never have dreamt of what I had missed. But, luckily, I was detained here sorely against my will for a day; and have now been detained here, very much according to my will, for forty.

It is a beautiful country this, hereabouts: The river so fine, and its banks so rich, and

yet so romantic—and then the (not *harvest*, but) *vendange* moon, smiling down upon both so luxuriantly! Oh! those moonlight walks by the banks of the Loire! A year's delay were well repaid by one of them! But you are still in the dark as to what I am flying into these raptures about: I promised to begin at the beginning, and I will.

I broke down just without the gates of the town, on a Saturday night; and the next day, being detained, I went to church. The old proverb was verified on the occasion—

“Near the church—you know the rest—”

I confess my thoughts were wholly abstracted from devout subjects, by my eyes changing to light upon one of the loveliest creatures which ever crossed their vision, seated at a very short distance from me. She seemed to be about eighteen, and her beauty was equally great and peculiar. She had more even than the usual darkness of com-

plexion of a French woman; her hair was like jet, her eyebrows and eyelashes were, if possible, darker still; and the latter, from their extreme length, appeared to be even more so than they really were. But her eyes were blue—deep, rich, transparent blue; which, with such dark accompaniments, gave an air, certainly of peculiarity, but of most lovely peculiarity, to the expression of her radiant and speaking countenance. Her form was scarcely yet arrived at its complete fulness, but its outline was perfect; and a few months, as it seemed to me, would finish the filling up. Altogether, I had scarcely ever seen a more lovely, certainly, never a more striking, person. But by this expression you must not conceive there was any *ostentation*, if I may be permitted the word, of manner or bearing. On the contrary, the most exquisite delicacy was spread,

like a veil, over this radiant beauty, softening, and yet enhancing, its perfection. You know I am somewhat fastidious, and am not ready to think every pretty face a beautiful one; but this one was so, and I studied it in every light and posture; for I scarcely removed my eyes from it, during the whole service.

My first endeavour was to discover who this lady of the Loire might be; in this there was not much difficulty. She was, it seemed, an Italian. Her mother had been French, and came from Tours. This mother she had lost some six years ago, and had then come to reside, for education, with her maternal aunt. Her education was now complete; and her father was very shortly expected to arrive, to take her back to Italy with him.

Such was the substance of the information,

which, with the assistance of my faithful Eustache, I gleaned concerning her. My next endeavour was of higher flight ; it was to become known to her. Thus I set about it. Her uncle's house is at the outskirts of the town, with a garden stretching down to the river, leaving only just space for a low wall, and a narrow path to intervene between them. Hither, in the evening, I repaired ; but finding that I could not well pace up and down there, without attracting notice, I procured a small skiff, and pulling myself into a spot in a convenient position, with respect to the garden, affected to begin to fish. I cannot say that I have any direful accident to relate of her falling into the water, and of my pulling her out again, as I know I am bound in romance to have. If the truth is to be spoken, I can boast of nothing of this kind ; on the contrary, only of passing several wearisome

hours, with a fishing rod between my legs, and without the least glimpse of my fair one to repay me for my patience and anxiety. At length, just as the twilight was deepening, and I was beginning, in despair, to row homeward, I saw a white gown, in distinct relief, against the dark trees, approaching down the lawn, and fluttering in the evening wind.

It is a pretty sight this—eh, Frewin? The rustle and waving of the drapery of the dear sex—Heaven bless it!—have always in them something strangely moving to my sensations; but when, as in this case, it enwraps a form which might be a Greek statue, only for its living warmth and motion; and when the eyes have been, for hours, aching for the appearance of the individual wearer, then indeed there is a delight in such appearances, which—I shall not punish you by descanting upon at length.

She approached, and seated herself upon a stone bench, so placed as to command a view of the reach of the river. It was not yet so dark but that I could, being, as I was, only a few yards distant, see her distinctly and minutely. She was looking up at the fine summer-evening sky, as if thinking of her own sunny land and azure heavens. At least, I chose to bestow upon her the most becoming train of thought; for I was in a romantic mood, and truly I had something to excite it. There she sat, with her fine hair gently moved by the wind, and her beautiful face slightly up-turned, affording me a perfect view of its sweet, yet powerful expression. Her form, exquisite in motion, exquisite in repose, was reclining against the back of the seat, giving to view the voluptuous sweep of its fine and delicate outline. Her small white fingers supported her cheek,

as she looked upon the twilight scene with those deep blue eyes, which had already struck me as affording so singular and so charming a completion to her southern style of beauty.

The scene, too, upon which she gazed, was in good unison with such a gazer. The river, broad, full, and swift, glided past her with a deep, gurgling sound, expressive, I think, beyond all others in Nature, of serenity, seclusion, and repose. The dark towers of the cathedral of the town, rose against the near horizon on one side; while, on the other, the prospect extended up the river along a valley of exquisite richness, glowing with vineyards just ready for the *vendanges*. Had not I some reason to be a little more exalted than usual?

I was just thinking how I should attract her attention without scaring her, when I perceived a gentleman and a lady advancing

towards her. I recognized them as the uncle and aunt; and wished them where uncles and aunts usually are wished on such occasions—at the devil. I was afterwards, however, not sorry they came; for they had not been there many minutes, before, I conclude at their entreaty, Antonia (for that is her very Italian Christian name) began to sing. I believe music is a natural Italian instinct. It is artificial in France—it is only in its infancy in England—but of an Italian it is the vernacular speech. Antonia sang exquisitely; her voice was fuller and richer in its sweetness, than I should have anticipated from her appearance; her singing was wholly without pretension, and with scarcely any ornament; but, on the contrary, with simple execution of a very charming melody, and with remarkable distinctness of enunciation of the words. This

last quality it was, which enabled me to follow the poetry ; for she sang in Italian, and if it had been with the usual cadenzas and flourishes that we hear at the Opera House, my limited proficiency in the language would not have allowed me to understand more of her song than I usually do of Madame Mara's—about half-a-dozen words, namely ; such as “ pêne, bene, crudeltà, felicità,” and such stock rhymes of the *libretti*. What I now heard, in a scene, and from a singer, so very different, was a sort of rondeau, of which the point consisted in the repetition of the answer “ Non so !” to a succession of variously combined questions concerning love ; thereby importing that the maker of the said answer, as yet, knew nothing of that *Amore*, who, as one of the rhymes informed me, was *Dominatore* of half the world beside. As at the end of each stanza, after

a short pause to give all the questions full effect, Antonia, softly, sweetly, and distinctly, added the emphatic "Non so!", I could not but think, as well as hope, that what she said was not merely general poetical fiction, but true in her own individual case. "She has only left the convent a few weeks," said I to myself, recalling the information I had gained concerning her, "so there is some chance that the answer may be applicable to herself. I should like to be her instructor in the sweet knowledge of which she professes her ignorance!"

As the last words of the last stanza died away upon her lips, I made some exclamation of admiration and delight, which attracted the notice of the trio. As I had no particular wish to become known to the seniors of the party, I shoved off my boat,

which had lain close under the bank, and pulled down the river as fast as I could go.

So ended my first attempt at an interview. You will say, I did not achieve much by it; but it proved a good foundation-stone, as you shall hear in my next. For the present, I have filled my gigantic sheet, [can you read it thus crossed?] and, moreover, time, tide, and the post, wait for no man; and the last of these impatient persons, or things, (which you will) is about to set off. I will write again in the course of the week; meanwhile believe me ever and ever your's,

PHILIP BLOUNT.

You may continue to direct hither, till further orders.

EXTRACT II.

" This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
 . . . May prove a beauteous flow'r, when next we meet,"

SHAKESPEARE.

[The following is from Mr. Blount's Note-book ;
 under a date about a fortnight *previous* to that
 of the foregoing letter.]

Tours, August, 1788.

" Qualis nox illa ! Dii, Deæque !" — What a
 night has this been ! Truly may I place a
 double white-stone at its date—for such pe-
 riods cannot very frequently occur !* Come,

* Throughout these diaries, the days which Mr. B.
 chooses to consider as having been fortunate or happy,
 are distinguished by a red-ink mark. At the above date,
 and at one or two others, this mark is crossed, by which
 it would seem a double degree of good fortune was im-
 plied.

my trusty note-book, let me set down in you the sensations of the last few hours, while they are yet glowing in instant memory.—It will be the best way to make my spirits subside down to sleeping-point; they are incalculable degrees above that Zero now.

Oh! the moonlight banks of the Loire! shall I ever forget you? No!—whatever scenes I may gaze on, whatever sensations I may feel, the soft dream of young Passion, which your calm solitudes have witnessed this night, will, with yourselves, be for ever graven on my heart's memory!

And yet, after all, there are many men, nay, there are many women too, who would look with considerable disdain on what has put me into all this rapture; and regard me, to use their own language, as being very soft, for putting to no further effect the scene in which I have just been an actor.

And do I regret that I did not take, or try to take, the advantages, which perhaps I might have done, of Antonia's gushing fondness, and utter self-abandonment?—No, by Heaven!—The full confession, and delicious *history* of her love for me, from its first doubtful dawn, to its present full ripeness, were not more grateful to my soul, as she uttered them, in her own sweet voice, upon my bosom, than is now the reflection that I did not break in upon such a train of feeling in her heart, by any thing grosser than her own fond and pure affection. The first emotions of love in the breast of a young and beautiful woman, are of an exalted and holy nature. And happy am I that I did not mar these attributes, by showing to what different issues they may be turned; how the highest and strongest feelings which Nature has implanted within

us, can be made subservient to the cause of sinful and inferior passion. I did not break in upon this blissful dream; I did not waken the fair creature, who was exposing to me the state of her young heart, beating and burning in all the fondness and confidence of a first affection, to a sense of the gross and degrading *reality* of man's love. What is man's love as compared to woman's? Nothing—worse than nothing. In its weakness and in its strength—in the fever of its hottest moments, and in the agueish coldness of its speedy decline—in fervour, in fondness, in endurance, in steady constancy—in each, in all, in every thing, man's love, in comparison with that of woman, is poor, weak, cold, paltry, yielding, changeful, evanescent, to the last and most intense degree!

And never did I feel the truth of this

And do I regret that I did not take, or try to take, the advantages, which perhaps I might have done, of Antonia's gush, her fondness, and utter self-abandonment?—Nay, by Heaven!—The full confession, and delicious *history* of her love for me, from its first doubtful dawn, to its present full ripeness, were not more grateful to my soul, as she uttered them, in her own sweet voice upon my bosom, than is now the reflection that I did not break in upon such a treasure of feeling in her heart, by any thing grosser than her own fond and pure affection. The first emotions of love in the breast of a young and beautiful woman, are of an exalted and holy nature. And happy am I that I did not mar these attributes, showing to what different issues they may be turned; how the highest and strongest feelings which Nature has implanted with

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more than as Antonia, to-night, revealed to me, in all the minuteness of detail, which is so delicious to lovers, the progress of her attachment towards me, and how each circumstance of our intercourse had affected it. The mixture (which in any thing but the manifestation of a heart, young, and fresh, and singularly unpractised, would be incongruous) of the most perfect frankness with delicacy equally perfect—of conscious fervency of feeling, and unconscious warmth of expression; or, at least, unconsciousness of the deductions to which they would lead:—the whole picture, in short, which she presented of the first impression of love upon the heart of a sensitive and ardent woman,—not only confirmed my previous belief, but encreased its extent exceedingly, of how different this same passion is in its operation on the two sexes.

Of myself, in the present instance, I do not speak. It is not now that I am to experience, for the first time, what love is; my feelings must necessarily be widely different from her's. I was first struck by her beauty, then by her delicacy of heart, and general accomplishments of understanding. Then I had the desire of success, the wish to excite her love; and, as I advanced, I felt the conscious satisfaction of success, in watching the progress and developement of her affection. Nor could I be in close and frequent intercourse with a person so attractive, and fascinating, without finding every day the love I feigned, to be less—and the love I felt, to be more. All these sensations added together, may amount to what most persons would class under the generic appellation “Love.” But how different is this, even were it twenty times more than it is, from what *she*

feels !—And what do I intend to do with this love, now that I have excited it? That is a question of which I have delayed the answer so long, that—I cannot now stop to answer it.

And yet, when I reflect that it is only a month since we first met, the whole business seems almost as a dream! What a chance it was that I saw her at all!—what a chance that I stopped at Tours more than a night! And am I glad or sorry that it did? So chance? Faith, I am not prepared to answer that question either. I certainly had no intention that matters should have gone to such a serious extent when I began; but, one step led on another, till—I will not think what the next must be.

A month !—it is a very short time for the heart to have gone the whole round, from indifference and calmness to the highest pitch

of passion. Plague take it! why must I intrude upon her state of peacefulness, to lead her upon that stormy sea, of which as yet she knows not half the dangers? The colour of her existence has been changed, her whole self has taken a new tone, in one short month! And yet, when I reflect how many hours we have passed alone together during that month—and what accessories of time and place have attended those meetings, it is not a very short time either. What phases of passion must her heart have undergone, while that moon has been completing her's! And even I have felt severe anxieties. My heart has become far more interested in the matter than I ever intended it should have done; with such a creature, I should have been a brute if it had been otherwise. But this night has paid me for all! Is there any thing?—there is *not* any thing, which can be compared

with the first thorough and complete avowal, *in words*, of a woman's love for us!—And then the recapitulation of all the fluctuations of fear, and hope, and fondness, and pique, and, at last, of full, flowing, fervent, undoubting love—what can equal *this*? While we listen to her dear voice, as it is breathed in that soft delicate tone in which woman speaks of love; while we press her closer to the heart, as each expression of fondness rises above the other; while we recall our own ideas of the probable effects of each circumstance of which she now reveals the real results—and as we, in our turn, contrast and compare these with each other; while, above all, every doubt which still might have remained—all fear, of which some might perhaps have lingered—are destroyed in the flood of love and certainty;—during such times as these, we might, for the moment, fancy our-

selves in a state of being more blissful than this world is given to bestow.

“What am I to do with the love I have thus excited?” This question recurs and recurs again, with increasing importunity for answer? But it is late, and my head aches; I will go to bed—to sleep, if I can—and postpone my answer till to-morrow.

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MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

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EXTRACT III.

“ We part—and had we never met,
 Happy had it been for thee :—
 My love has been thy bane ; but yet
 Oh ! cease not to remember me !” ANON.

[The following letter is not in immediate succession to that last given.]

Tours, October 1st, 1788.

MY DEAR FREWIN,—

AFTER the receipt of this, direct to Paris. I set off to-morrow morning. The game is played out, and I must return to acting with common sense, if I cannot feel with it just yet. I experience, at this moment, all the sensations of *le lendemain*, equally prevalent in morals as in physics. To be sure, it has been Champagne, and of

the first vintage, on which I have been banqueting; no wonder that I should have exceeded over night, and experience all the revulsion and depression of "the next day." Now am I in that mood that I could throw myself upon yonder couch, and cry for an hour or two, "with all the pleasure in life," as the Irishman says. Partly from spite, partly from the sudden sinking of overwrought spirits, and partly from *bond-fide* sorrow,—I could weep my heart out at my eyes, and, I am sure, should feel my bosom lightened by the operation. But I won't. I have nobody to blame but myself. It has all been my own doing; there 's no denying it. The bad was certainly my own doing; and the pride of my wicked self, will not let me cry for that. The right determination to which I came yesterday, was likewise my own doing; and what there is good in me will

not allow me to weep for this part of the matter: and yet, I question, whether I do not lament this last, which is my resolution to part from Antonia, far more than what I have characterised as bad; namely, my intercourse with her for the last two months. I have, indeed, been once or twice on the point of breaking through it, and setting off after her. "After her?" you will say.—Yes! she is gone, gone back to Italy, with her father; and we have parted, in all likelihood for ever!

I believe I told you, when I first spoke to you on this subject, that Antonia was shortly to return to Italy, her father being almost daily expected to arrive to take her back. If he had come when he was first expected, namely, within a few days of my arrival here, what a difference it would have made in his daughter's fate! Alas, Frewin

what unthinking scoundrels we men are!—
What lasting mischief do we cause from connexions which we begin, without giving one thought as to what they are to end in! But *this* does make me think,—“now that it is too late,” you will add; and, alas! truly.

What upon earth could possess me to throw away my time here, devoting myself—to what?—Why, to making a most amiable, beautiful, and interesting girl, unhappy. And *for* what? Why, for the sake of gratifying my own infernal vanity in rendering a creature thus charming, attached to my own sweet self. And what ultimate object did I propose to myself? Why, none! I shunned the question; I drove it from me, as often as it presented itself to my mind. What did I intend to do? Did I intend to marry?—or to do worse? Faith, I intended nothing. ~~Marry~~ I would not; nor would I “do worse,”

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even supposing that I could, of which I am by no means clear. I resolutely would look upon nothing beyond the present moment. I placed a curtain within six inches of my mental eyes, and would rather have cut it with my hand, than have raised it to throw open the view. Is not this a pretty *compte rendu* of my actions and feelings for the last two months of my life? Is it not a statement as clear, lucid, and satisfactory, as to reflect infinite honour upon the sense and meaning of the person who is able to make it? Truly, I think so. It is exceedingly flattering to me in every point of view; and leaves me, at the end of the summer, with a very comfortable retrospect, of how profitably, for myself and others, it has been spent.

Pshaw!—it is enough to make one look with contempt upon oneself, to consider how blind we are when the least dazzling of pas-

is effected upon our eyes; and in how
very different a light we regard things,
when the scales fall from off them. I can
see the folly, to use no harsher term, of my
own conduct, now, as well as any indifferent
observer—say, better, for I have a more inti-
mate knowledge of the facts. And yet it was
only yesterday that I had a most severe
struggle with myself, to prevent my putting
the climax to the injuries I have done this poor
girl, by urging her to become the partner of
my journey, instead of her father's. I had
not regained the clear use of my moral eye-
sight then, or I should not have paused for
a moment upon a proposition so fraught with
evil. (I must speak it out) dark guilt and
wickedness.

I am far, indeed, from feeling at all satis-
fied with myself for what I have done. I have
lost, irreversibly, the happy state of peace-

fulness in which I found her ; I have—— but hang it ! I will not go croaking on as to what I have done :—what I am about to do is, to set off for Paris to-morrow, where I hope very speedily to hear from you. Meanwhile, I will close my letter, for I can write on no subject but one, and that I had rather let alone for the present.

Your's ever,

P. B.

[The following passage in the Diary relates to the same occurrence.]

Orléans, October 2, 1788.

What a contrast does this solitary, desolate evening present to those I have been passing lately ! I wish I had not stopped, but that I had continued travelling all night ; for then, at any rate, the difference would not have pressed so forcibly upon me. I never found my inn at Tours solitary of an even-

ing. The Loire, with its full stream and its beautiful banks, was my evening abode,—and Antonia, dear, dear, lost Antonia! my companion: Yes! she is, indeed, lost to me! It is a chance, beyond calculation, whether I ever see her again! And I have seen her so constantly of late—she has been so exclusively not only my object of interest, but my companion, that the vacuum in my heart at our separation is beyond description. It is the most painful and desolating sensation in the world. I have felt it before now, and from the same cause, but never with the same intensity. All the affections of my heart, all the exertions of my mind, have been so strongly and undividedly concentrated upon this one individual, that the sudden cessation of our intercourse is certainly one of the most painful and sickening revulsions that I have ever undergone. “The affections of my

heart?" And were they really so deeply implicated in the matter?—In good truth, I believe they were; far more, undoubtedly, than I meant they should have been, when I began. But I suppose the moth does not intend to burn himself, when he flutters round the flame. He had better not come there at all, though, if he wishes to remain unsinged. Yes! my affections have indeed become more enthralled than I had any fear of their becoming. I thought I had more command over them; I thought I had them fastened, like a falcon by a string, and that I could let them take short and gentle flights, and recall them at will. But the cord, I suppose from being a silken one, broke, and the 'tassel-gentle' would not be 'lured back again.'...

And yet I have permitted that we should part! I almost wonder at myself, at times, for having had the resolution to do so. Nay,

at this moment, if she were here before me, I almost think I should sacrifice every consideration—youth, liberty, all—and give her heart and hand together, and at once. 'Tis well then, perhaps, she is not here; for if I were to let my romance and my passion run away with me in this way, I should, ten to one, speedily and lastingly rue having so far lapsed from my usual self-command in these matters. I ought to have learned, and earned it too, by this time; and I thought I had; but I have been near smarting for my presumption. No! no! I will not be cast into Benedick yet awhile!

For the rest, what if I had persuaded her to accompany me on this journey, without being my wife? I could, I think, if I had tried very hard. But my conscience, unaccustomed as I am to hear him much, whenever I trenched towards the subject, spoke so

loud as to drown every thing else, and to silence me altogether. I cannot say that my conscience, on these occasions, used very flattering language. 'Scoundrel!' 'villain!' were among the gentlest of his hypothetical epithets; and, as I could not belie him, granting his hypothesis, I had nothing left for it but to prevent *that* being made real.

Never was any thing conducted so totally without object—never was any thing so completely of means, without an end. I had no object when I began, beyond the moment; and afterwards also, every moment was insulated in itself throughout our intercourse. It stood upon its own grounds, and had no reference to any thing that was to follow. Neither have I any point of time, however distant, to look to when we may meet again. There is no resting-place for Hope—even in the prospect of a life. And do I wish, then,

that she should forget me? No! I do not, I cannot wish it. When I bade her forget me, in words—my voice and my manner belied them; and when she said “Never!” I could not repeat the prohibition. No! as my impression was the first made upon her heart, may it ever continue the deepest!

It is only two nights since we sat on our green knoll together, our hearts yearning with increased fondness—our souls saddened and softened by our approaching separation. How beautiful she looked! Her eyes shaded by tenderness and by sadness—yet beaming with the ennobling fire of a woman’s early love! This miniature, when I first saw it, I thought the happiest likeness I had ever beheld; the expression was so admirably seized and rendered. But what is it to that which her face wore when I last gazed upon it? Oh! there is nothing on this earth so

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It is only two nights since we sat on our lawn knoll together, our hearts yearning with increased fondness—our souls saddened and softened by our approaching separation. Beautiful she looked! Her eyes shaded with sadness and by sadness—yet beaming with the ennobling fire of a woman’s early

This miniature, when I first saw it, might be the happiest likeness I had ever seen; the expression was so admirably well rendered. But what is it to that? Her face wore when I last gazed upon it! there is nothing on this earth so


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It is only two nights since we sat on our own knoll together, our hearts yearning with increased fondness—our souls saddened and stiffened by our approaching separation. How beautiful she looked! Her eyes shaded with tenderness and by sadness—yet beaming with the ennobling fire of a woman’s early

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aristocratical sentiments, (though, Heaven knows! these are strong enough among them,) but because they feel that their own places are usurped,—that these nameless personages monopolize the attentions which they conceive to be due to themselves alone. They talk of *scandale*, and *libertinage*, and want of *bienséance*, in a manner which, considering the quarter from whence it comes, is edifying to the last degree. In the more polite times of twenty years back, it was incumbent upon a man of quality to intrigue only with the wife of his friend. That was quite as it should be, and was never gainsaid. But to abandon these persons to regularity of conduct, whether they will or no, and intermix with plebeian paramours; that, indeed, is an iniquity—a breach of morals and of virtue—which it is impossible to reprobate too loudly, or too severely.



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It is only two nights since we sat on our little knoll together, our hearts yearning with increased fondness—our souls saddened and softened by our approaching separation. How beautiful she looked! Her eyes shaded with tenderness and by sadness—yet beaming with the ennobling fire of a woman's early

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It is only two nights since we sat on our hill knoll together, our hearts yearning for increased fondness—our souls saddened and pained by our approaching separation. Beautiful she looked! Her eyes shaded by softness and by sadness—yet beaming with the ennobling fire of a woman’s early youth. This miniature, when I first saw it, the happiest likeness I had ever seen. The expression was so admirably rendered. But what is it to that face wore when I last gazed upon her? Here is nothing on this earth so

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late years; and these unhappy persons seem like the bat in the fable, to belong neither to the beasts nor the birds. The general characteristic of the noble deputies, as they marched by, was undoubtedly a sombre and sour cast of countenance; for as they are at the top of the wheel, and as the very meeting of the States General proves that it will turn in some degree, they figure to themselves no very particular pleasure in the events which will probably follow. Indeed, it is pretty generally understood that the exemption of the privileged orders from taxation must, of necessity, be immediately abolished.

But the most imposing part of the sight was, beyond all doubt, the Deputies of the Tiers Etat. They were dressed in plain clothes and long black cloaks; but in number, in general appearance, and, above all, in

s and enlightenment, they most indisputably possess the superiority over their colleagues. They are chiefly composed, as I am informed, of merchants, of men of letters, and, above all, of lawyers. Some few, however, have chosen to be returned to the third order.

Among these is the celebrated Comte de Montmorin—a man who, in various ways, has acquired a reputation, bad and good, far greater than that of any of his fellow deputies. He was pointed out to me as he marched in the ranks, and, though far from being handsome, he undoubtedly the air of a man of extraordinary kind. He was remarkable, in particular, for the extreme length and profusion of the wig which he wore, which gave his physiognomy a very singular aspect. His face is pale and pock-marked, but his nose is broad and square, and his eye

and his mouth both evince the traits of the firmest determination, and the most unquenchable ardour.

Great things are expected from this celebrated person. He is spoken of with much enthusiasm—from some, of admiration, from others, of hatred; but I have heard no one mention him with affection. The wrongs of his early years (he has been repeatedly imprisoned by lettres-de-cachet) were followed by the most flagrant moral irregularities, in the issue of nearly all of which he ultimately triumphed, by sheer dint of his own talents, skill, audacity, and eloquence. He has now a nobler and wider field for his eloquence; and, if he be the man he is considered to be, he cannot fail to go a great way.

The next day, the opening of the Session itself took place. A large temporary building had been erected, in the avenue of Versailles, to receive the Deputies. A consider-

number of strangers were admitted to
ess the scene; and I was able to procure
ket. At the upper end of the hall was
d a raised platform, with the throne for
King, an arm-chair for the Queen, and
s without arms for the rest of the Royal
ly.* Below, the Deputies were arran-

The clergy stretched down the hall on
ight hand, the nobles on the left, and
iers Etat faced the platform.

er waiting a considerable time, the
and Queen entered. At this moment,
very strongly that indescribable sensa-
which is experienced when we personally
ss a ceremony relating to great histori-
ents, more especially when it is one at
a great body of people assists. It is
impression (if I may so speak) of solem-
ne etiquette of the French Court, with respect to
s something ludicrous. The Queen has a *fautueil*;
of the blood royal, *des chaises*; and certain orders
nobility, *des tabourets*. This is precious fooling.

nity, which is physically felt chiefly in its effect upon the respiration, and from thence upon the muscles of the breast. But I should in vain attempt to describe it. It is sufficiently well known to those who have experienced it themselves.

The Queen was evidently in considerable agitation: her colour came and went; and she seemed to be assisting at an assembly to which, and to its purposes, she felt no goodwill. I could not help being struck with the singular effect which (to my English eyes) the appearance of the Queen, thus officially among the representatives of the nation, made upon me. Surely it is something anomalous in a nation in which the salique law exists.

The King was calm and even cold, which is the general expression of his countenance. He seemed little moved by the perfect novelty and singular importance of the crisis,

of the position in which he stood ; but delivered the speech, with which the business of the day opened, with a steady and simple enunciation, and a quiet dignity of manner, which, I am told, are the usual characteristics of his public appearances.

The Chancellor (M. de Barantin) also spoke ;—as did M. Necker, who delivered a very clear and able statement of the financial condition of the country. This celebrated person has an air of simplicity and firmness, which is in keeping with the character of his administration—and his official statement was given with all that clearness, which might be expected from so distinguished a financier. With his discourse terminated the business of this remarkable day. All the world was now occupied in discussing in how many members the Deputies are to sit. No resolution seems yet to have been made upon this subject ; and every body talks, writes,

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and thinks of nothing else. Some say it will be in one, some two, some three ; but, for my part, I hear too much about it, every day and all day, to have the slightest inclination to debate the matter now upon paper.

NOTE, by the Editor. The letters and diaries of Mr. Blount at this period are, very naturally, almost wholly ingrossed with the details of the French Revolution which fell under his observation. For obvious reasons, however, it is not my purpose to insert them here. But the following account of the taking of the Bastille involves no political discussion—and, as being the narrative of an eye-witness, may prove interesting to my readers. It was, in some degree, to prepare them for at least the tone of the period, that I have preceded it with the account of the meeting of the States General, which they have just read.

EXTRACT VI.

— Cet affreux château, palais de la vengeance,
renferme souvent le crime et l'innocence ! ”

HENRIADE ; CHANT IV.

[From the Diary.]

Paris, July, 1789.

JULY, these are awful times we live in. An incredibly short suffices to work the stupendous changes. A very few hours annihilated that which had stood for centuries. That fearful prison-house, whose secrets were known to few, and revealed by none, is thrown open to the gaze of all ;—the secret is no more ! A person leaving Paris, to-morrow week, would, as he passed out South-street, have gone close under the walls of this

fortress, which could never be contemplated without a feeling allied both to disgust and awe;—returning now, he would find it empty, dismantled, and with workmen actively employed in totally razing it to the ground. To what a train of moral feelings does it not give rise, thus to have free access and regress to and from a place hitherto so closely secured and so vigilantly guarded;—to walk familiarly and without impediment among those walls, which have for ages formed the very bugbear of arbitrary and secret imprisonment; into which so many, like the beasts in the fable of the Sick Lion's Cave, entered, but never returned again! But I have taken up my pen to record facts while they are fresh in instant memory—I shall have plenty of time for moralizing whenever I may choose to occupy myself so vainly.

I was an eye-witness of a great part of

engagement (if so it can be called) on the 11th. For about eight-and-forty hours previous to that memorable day, there had been indications of some great movement on the part of the people. Men left their ordinary business, and were to be seen moving about with faces of importance and of animation, or standing in groups engaged in a more eager and animated conversation. Towards the evening of the 12th, many of these were armed in arms; and by nightfall an increasing number of armed citizens were assembled in their different districts. No one

could say where this thunder-cloud would discharge itself. Every now and then, how-

ever, a gloomy murmur of the word *Bastille* seemed to indicate where it would break. There had, some short time previously, been a tumult in the Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine, which had induced the governor, M. de

Launay, to put the Bastille into some state of defence ; and his preparations had, it is said, increased in proportion with the augmentation of the ferment in Paris. There were altogether upon the towers about fifteen pieces of cannon, eight and four-pounders ; but, as it would seem, they were almost totally useless for any purpose beyond that of firing a salute,—either from decay ; or from the manner in which they were mounted completely exposing those who served the guns, in the act of reloading them. There were, however, some small pieces, between cannon and small-arms, called *amusettes du Comte de Saxe*, placed at different loop-holes, besides a piece of ordnance charged with grape, which was placed in one of the courts. : The garrison consisted of eighty-two Invalids, and of thirty-two men of a Swiss regiment, under the command of a lieutenant

the present state of the public mind, preparations for defence appeared to offence; and violent murmurs were kindled by the appearance of the ordnance towers. Early on the 14th a deputation from the Hôtel-de-Ville waited on the governor, to state the agitation which these caused, and to request that they might be removed. M. de Launay answered, that he would not dismount the guns without an order from the king; but that, having recently received some intimation of the feelings of the people with regard to them, he had ordered them to be run back as far from the enemy as it was possible. Some members of this deputation were even permitted to go all over the fortifications, that they might judge with their own eyes of how things stood; and the garrison swore to them that they would not fire, nor make

use of them, unless they were first attacked. With this they seemed tolerably satisfied, and, for the time, retired.

In about half an hour afterwards, however, an immense crowd of people arrived before the Bastille, armed with every species of weapon, and of offensive instruments which could be used as such. Guns, swords, axes, all were put into requisition; there was scarcely a man who had not one or the other. They shouted "We will have (*nous voulons*) the Bastille!—down with the soldiers!—down with the Bastille!" With these cries they approached the out-works in very considerable numbers: the men on the walls, it seems, called out to them, to warn them of the danger they were in, exposed as they were to the fire of the place; but they came on, no whit daunted, and gained possession of the first small

-bridge by an act of individual act-
and courage, not a little remarkable.

man, who was, as I have heard,
ld soldier, climbed upon the roof of
house nearest to the bridge, (a perfu-
shop); and, from thence, got upon
outmost wall—from this he let him-
drop upon the top of the guard-house;
thence into the court. He searched
e guard-house for the keys of the
-bridge, to which he was now close,
they had been removed. He then
l to his associates for an axe. This
hrown to him—with this he broke the
and locks which secured the bridge—
it fell!—In like manner, with more
s, the great outer draw-bridge was
lowered; and the assailants had now
ng in the outworks of the place.
ll this time the garrison had forborne

to fire. Indeed no shot had been discharged on either side. But, emboldened by this success, the assailants rushed, in a mass, to carry the second bridge also ; and, as they came on they fired a volley upon the garrison. This was returned ; and with so much effect that they retreated under different vaulted archways of the outer courts, to protect themselves from the fire of the troops. From hence they kept up a continual fire, but they did not advance against the second bridge.

What I have hitherto related, I did not personally witness ; but I have gathered it since, from the thousand and one tongues which have been occupied with nothing else, from that time to this. It was after matters had been, for about an hour, in the state which I have just described, that I arrived

view of the scene. Thus it came

in the division of what Sterne calls
ative Travellers; that is, I take care
every thing I consider worth seeing
places where I am. I do not mean
churches and pictures, for there are
things I place far above them in my
curiosity. But, for sights which bear
and develope human character ge-
, and national character in particular,
complete *badaud*.* The great his-
events which have taken place since
been in Paris, have furnished ample
for this appetite; and I have banqueted
on accordingly. I go frequently to
places to be present at the meetings of
National Assembly; I walk about the
Parisian word, for a person who runs to see sights.

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cialties have acquired such an accession of consideration, and thence of power, *that* is the chief nucleus of the overt acts which take place in Paris. I was there on the 14th—from the general impression that something extraordinary must result from the ferment of the last two days; but without having any idea of the extent to which the movement of the people would be carried. I arrived there about one o'clock, just at the moment that a deputation from the city was about to proceed to the Bastille; the news of its being attacked having rapidly spread, and the sound of the firing being a continuous proof that the attack was still prosecuted. The deputation marched with a drum and a flag, in order, I believe, to assert their official character; and thousands upon thousands were gathering in its train.

Now, I had some debate with myself as

to the course I should pursue:—I had the strongest desire to get a sight of the siege of the Bastille, but I had no sort of inclination to be shot in the endeavour to gratify it. Had I been a Frenchman, my decision on the subject must have been made long ago; but, being a foreigner, I thought it would be the height of folly to get myself knocked on the head for the concerns of the French people. “*Que diable alloit-il faire dans cette galère?*” would have been a fitting epitaph and elegy for me, if I had fallen when engaged upon such an adventure. But I thought that I had now a fair opportunity of, at least, seeing what danger there was, before I put myself in the way of it. I was pretty confident that the Bastille would not fire upon the city deputation, at least without some parley. So I set off under its wing, in the midst of an immense mass of armed

citizens who accompanied it. The far greater part of these was evidently composed of men unused to arms—shopkeepers, tradesmen, and mechanics, who had, by seizing the first weapon in their way, converted themselves into soldiers for the time; but I said to myself that I would for ever give up all pretensions to skill in physiognomy; if they did not, for the most part, bear themselves like the most gallant veterans if matters came to extremities. As the turn-out was perfectly voluntary, no one assumed arms who did not feel within himself the prompting courage to do so; and, accordingly, though of course there was no military regularity or uniformity, I thought I had never seen a more determined-looking set of men than those by whom I was now surrounded. For my own part, I had no ostensible arms but a stout walking-stick, almost worthy of the

denomination of a cudgel; but I carried in my bosom, as I have always done in my similar perambulations, a pistol with a spring-bayonet, to defend myself in case of need.

We advanced down the Rue St. Antoine, at the extremity of which, on a sort of angle from which several streets branch off, the Bastille stands, or I should now, perhaps, more correctly say, stood. When we got to a part of the street where the houses are sufficiently near to it to command a view of what was passing, and yet were not subjected to any very great exposure, I dropped behind in order to see whether I could not obtain entrance into one of them. Most of the houses were, naturally, closed; but there was one, the *premier* of which was a sort of low tavern, which still remained open, in the expectation, doubtless, of profiting by the

vast concourse of people which was thronging by. Into this I entered ; and, after explaining to the very intelligent landlady what was my object, and, also, the reasons why I did not join the crowd, enforcing the whole with a due application of louis-d'ors, I was introduced, by her means, to a washerwoman who lived *au troisième* ; and who, for a certain consideration, permitted me to mount to one of her windows, on condition I would not open the wooden *jalousies* which were closely shut before it. Through the interstices of this I could both see and hear distinctly ; so I accepted her terms readily.

My endeavour was to see what had become of my late companions, the deputation. They had advanced so far that I could no longer distinguish their flag. I could see, however, that the soldiers on the towers reversed their pieces ; and shouldered them

with the muzzle downwards, and the butt in the air. They also displayed a flag of truce. These I conceived, and justly, to be tokens of being willing to parley with the deputation ; and the assailants seemed so to regard it also ; for their fire slackened considerably, though it did not wholly cease. I was, therefore, not a little surprised, when in the course of about twenty minutes, or half an hour, a shout, the most tremendous I ever heard issue from human lungs, was raised—the attack was recommenced with redoubled fury, and the garrison returned the fire briskly, and with considerable effect.

I have since learned that this was occasioned by mutual jealousies and distrusts, between the governor and the deputation, aided by the excessive noise which prevailed rendering it impossible for the parties to be heard to each other. The garrison, as they

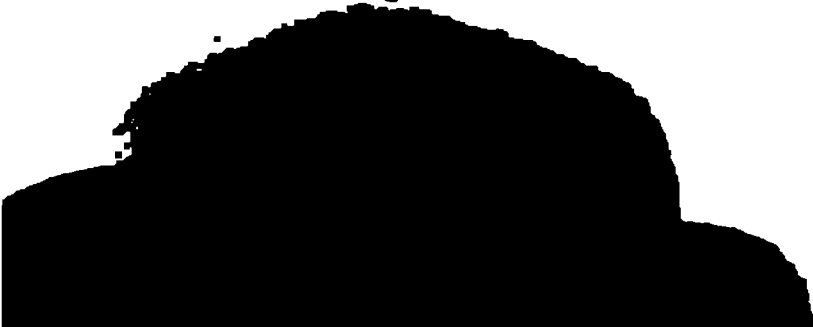
assert, ended by believing the deputation to be a feigned one; and the deputation, on their part, accuse the garrison of having fired upon them unawares. It appears, however, that the deputation was divided, one party had the flag and drum, and the other not; and amidst the noise and confusion of such a scene, it was most difficult to know who was who, and what to believe, or whom to trust. It is certain, however, that the deputation finally did not enter the Bastille; and that, on their departure, the people rushed forward to attack the second bridge, with the utmost eagerness and determination.

Nothing could be more awfully interesting than the scene which now presented itself to me. I had never before witnessed any thing in the nature of an engagement, beyond a sham-fight in Hyde Park, and this alone would have been sufficient to have strongly

impressed and excited me : but the circumstances attending this attack, were immeasurably more memorable than the attack itself, as such. Here was a strong fortress, which had been the terror of all Paris for nearly four hundred years,* now attacked, not by a disciplined and skilful army, but by the very citizens who had hitherto trembled at the bare name of the place, which, untaught, untrained, they were now assailing to its downfall.

I was not, however, at this time, (about three o'clock in the afternoon,) at all assured that they would ultimately succeed. Though

* The two first towers of the Bastille were built, one on each side the, then, Porte St. Antoine, to defend the entrance to the city, in 1370, under Charles V. The other six towers, and the connecting curtains, were built in the reign of his successor, in the year 1380, when the castle assumed its present shape, and the road was turned, as it now exists. Some modern works were added about Henry II.'s time.



the heavy cannon of the place was almost useless, yet its mere defensive strength, in the nature of walls and ditches, rendered it highly improbable that it would be taken by assault; and, as for blockade, which might have been made efficacious, it was manifestly impossible for it to continue long without the place being relieved by external assistance. Neither did the event prove me to be very far wrong, for there was only one man in the garrison killed throughout the day; the place was surrendered, not taken; and the speedy capitulation is universally attributed to the extreme unpopularity of the governor, not only with the prisoners, but with the officers and the troops under his command. It was with considerable difficulty that they were kept to their duty during the attack. But I am anticipating.

The party which advanced upon the second

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bridge were repulsed, with considerable loss. I saw several men fall, and, from their being left on the spot, I conclude they were killed outright. A good many others were carried away wounded, and some of them passed close under the window at which I was stationed. The assailants, however, though driven back, did not retreat far, but maintained a continual fire. Few things, indeed, surprised me more, during the day, than the quickness and regularity of the fire of musketry, considering how unpractised the hands were which kept it up.

At a little before four o'clock, they brought three large waggons full of straw, to set fire to the out-buildings. This was the greatest blunder which was committed throughout the affair. The flames thus caused, were far more an impediment to them, than an annoyance to the garrison; and accordingly, the

waggons had not been long on fire, before as strenuous endeavours were made to remove them, as there had previously been to bring them, and place them accurately. I saw one individual dash forward, and, by his unassisted strength and courage, withdraw one of these blazing waggons, which blocked up the approach to the main gate of entrance. This feat excited vast shouts from the assailants; and truly it deserved all praise. A bolder, or a more intrepid action I never beheld. Two others had accompanied this man in his attempt, but they were killed at each side of him. He ultimately succeeded alone.

Some of the corps known by the name of the French guards* now appeared—not to attack, but to assist the citizens. They

* Gardes Françaises; afterwards “La Garde Nationale.”

brought with them six pieces of artillery, among which was a mortar: these began to play upon the place. This was now the critical moment. The crisis had risen to the most enthralling degree of interest; and yet it was at this time that I quitted the scene. I think, moreover, that most others in my place would have done as much. I perceived that although the attack was still kept up by vast numbers, with extreme steadiness and bravery, small parties of two and three began to detach themselves from the outer part of the crowd, and to walk rapidly away in various directions. Many passed up the Rue St. Antoine, and I endeavoured to discover from their conversation what it was that caused this new proceeding. I soon guessed that these persons were not among the bravest of those assembled; for their looks betrayed considerable agitation, and

they continually looked back over their shoulders, till they fairly got out of sight. I was some time before I could divine what new danger had arisen to alarm them, to which they had not equally been exposed throughout the day: I was so high above the street, that I could scarcely catch a word that was said in a conversational tone: at last, one person calling to another at a little distance, informed me of the cause of their retreat, which, I confess, instantly induced me to join to them. It seems that, by some communication from within, it had become current that M. de Launay had declared, that rather than give himself up into the hands of the people, he would set fire to the powder magazine, and blow himself and the Bastille into the air together. This he might do if he pleased, for any thing I cared, if it regarded only himself; but there was known

to be a large quantity of powder in the place, which would have blown up half the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, and all the streets surrounding the Bastille, if it went off at all. This was a serious consideration for me, where I was then situated. So, telling my hostess of what I had heard, I decamped with considerable celerity, and began to retrace my steps towards the Hotel-de-Ville.

I have since learned that the danger was greater than I had, at the time, in fact supposed it to be; for it was not a mere empty threat, on the part of M. de Launay. "He had actually taken up a lighted match, and was proceeding to the powder-magazine, when the sentries prevented his putting his design into execution, by presenting their fixed bayonets at his breast. It is further stated, and I believe with perfect truth, that he summoned a council of the garrison, and stated

to them, that as there seemed no hope of relief from without, and as, from fatigue and reluctance to fire on their fellow-countrymen, their defence was growing slacker and slacker, he saw nothing for it, but to blow up the Bastille and themselves together, rather than put themselves into the hands of the sanguinary populace. The garrison did not, in the slightest degree, coincide with the governor's view of the case: they had not such reasons to fear the effects of unpopularity as he had, and had no more desire to be suddenly sent up to figure in mid-air, than I had myself.

They accordingly took effectual means to prevent his surprising them with the execution of his project; and, after much importunity, persuaded him to allow them to send a flag of truce up to one of the towers, with a drum to beat a retreat. This was

accordingly done. The Parisians, it was probable, had no great knowledge of the different points of war; but of the meaning of a white flag thus displayed, they could not but be aware. They still, however, continued their efforts to enter the place; partly because they feared some stratagem, and partly because their fire from so many different quarters is said to have fallen among each other, and to have been mistaken to have proceeded from the place. Nay, some affirm still, that the fire from the Bastille did not cease; but I think the former version the more probable. The confusion was, naturally, extreme, and the mistake one which might easily arise.

At last, however, they began to perceive that the fire had slackened; and they approached closer to the bridge, still discharging volleys, crying out "Lower the bridge!"

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large plank was thrown across the ditch, and the same person whom I have already mentioned as having withdrawn the waggon of blazing straw,* passed across, received it, and handed it to an officer of the Queen's regiment, who, strange to say ! had been most active in the attack. This officer, M. Elie, read the paper aloud. The people cried out " Lower your bridge—nothing shall happen to you !" and M. Elie, " We accept your terms, upon the word of an officer (*foi d'officier*)—lower your bridge."

But M. Elie found it impossible to keep the promise he had thus given. The moment the bridge was lowered and the gate opened, the people rushed in, in tumultuous crowds. Acknowledging no commander, they

* This person's name, I am informed, is *Réole* ; he is a mercer, and lives near St. Paul's. He performed many distinguished acts of bravery during the day.

disregarded the capitulation,—they violated every feeling of humanity. It is now that the painful part of the narrative begins. It was impossible, under such circumstances of excitement as I was placed in, not to have the feelings enlisted on the one side or the other. I confess my hopes and wishes had gone along with the assailants:—had they been as merciful after their victory, as they were brave in gaining, I should have had no cause to regret their success.

The Bastille surrendered at about twenty minutes before five o'clock. For about half-an-hour previously to this time, I had left the Rue St. Antoine, and gone to the Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, where, as may be supposed, no inconsiderable degree of anxiety and agitation existed. After remaining here some time, I was just beginning to think of turning homeward, when I heard the most

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commands of their officers;—that they should have been fired upon by the Swiss troops, if they had refused to obey;—and to all, they begged, as the only recompense for their services, to be allowed to save the lives of these soldiers. On such a plea, it should not, at that moment, be denied them; though I question whether their other arguments would have had the desired effect. The Invalids were given into the hands of the Gardes Françaises, who escorted them to their head-quarters at the Hôtel des Invalides.

This was scarcely done when another party drew near with the officers. These did not go into the Hôtel-de-Ville at all; but shouted:—*"A la Grève! à la Grève!"*

proceeded in that direction, dragging in their unfortunate victims with them.

A cold shudder came over me. I could

not doubt what their fate would be. The populace seemed drunk with rage;—they yelled forth the most horrible cries of vengeance against the unhappy men who were in their hands; and, as they hurried them along, seemed almost too impatient to postpone their death till they arrived at the spot on which they had determined to inflict it.—This was the common place of execution. They determined that those who had governed the Bastille should die where the vilest criminals undergo the ignominious sentence of the law. I was inexpressibly shocked. The sight of men so shortly to be deprived of life, and that in so dreadful a manner, was sufficient in itself to raise the strongest emotions of terror and disgust;—but I had never previously witnessed any scene at all similar; I had never beheld living men so soon to become inanimate corpses. The effect on me had all the addi-

tional effect of novelty, in addition to its own inseparable horrors.

Yet, notwithstanding that I felt all this, and felt it more strongly than I can express in words, I was irresistibly impelled to go with the crowd, and witness, with my own eyes, how it would all end. I had seen, during that day, many individuals meet death;—but, oh! what difference there is between its being inflicted and suffered “in the trade of war,” and the being massacred by a sanguinary mob, with no one near but enemies, with every eye beaming hatred and rage upon you, instead of those soothing appliances which we need so much at the moment when the spirit takes its awful flight into Eternity. Yet, sick and shuddering as I was, I followed the multitude to the Place de Grève.

“M. de Launay, the Governor, seemed to be the object of universal execration. He

not only was the Governor of the Bastille, but he had been individually and peculiarly obnoxious and hated as such. It is said that there would, more than once, have been insurrections of the prisoners, and sometimes of the troops, in the Bastille, if it had not been for the mildness, firmness, and moderation of M. de Losme, his major, who was as much beloved as the governor was detested. But, alas ! this amiable and excellent man was here also ; and no distinction seemed to be made between the fate which impended over both. There were only these two officers who arrived at the Place de Grève—some had escaped altogether—and two had been killed on the way.

M. de Launay was a man apparently near fifty ; his head was uncovered, and his dress was greatly disordered. His face was the picture of despair. Though a brave man

physically, I doubt not—indeed, his endeavour to blow up the Bastille sufficiently proves this—the horrors of such a death as this seemed almost to have unstrung his nerves. His cheek was deadly white—his eyes were glazed and haggard. In the midst of the most appalling cries, he was dragged to the usual place of execution: a ruffian behind him raised an axe with which he was armed—struck—and the head rolled upon the pavement! It was instantly snatched up, placed upon the end of a pike, and carried off to the Palais Royal.

M. de Losme's fate was different. M. de Launay was just slain, and the crowd were tearing the major, one from another, that each might be the most forward in putting him to death, when a man, apparently about thirty, forced his way through the crowd—threw himself between De Losme and his

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been cut off from all intercourse with his species, that now, that he is restored to it, he has no longer powers to enjoy it.

Thank God ! the system of *lettres de cachet* is no more ! it never can revive again. It is true that I am not a fellow countryman to this people, among whom it has so long existed ; but, at all events, I am bound to them as a fellow-creature ; and no one, with a human heart within his breast, can fail to rejoice at the annihilation of so dreadful an engine of secret and silent tyranny. During the last few days, the archives of the Bastille have been open to the public, and the parts of them which have already appeared would, if I were inclined to so odious a task, furnish me with materials for a history, at which human nature would shudder, and which those who live in future times would not believe.

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CHAPTER I.

“ If marriage should be always the consequence of mutual love, what would become of the prerogative of parents, and their authority over their children ?”

DON QUIXOTE, TRANSLATED BY MOTTEUX.

IN the daily papers of the month of May, 1786, appeared the following paragraph :—

“ MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE.

“ Yesterday was married, by special licence, at St. George’s, Hanover Square, the Right Honourable the Earl of Montore to Blanch, only daughter of James

Delvyn, Esq. of The Grange, in the county of Kent. The nuptials were celebrated with all the splendour fitted to the high rank and vast possessions of the noble bridegroom, and were attended by all the members of both the families at present in town, as well as by a chosen number of distinguished friends. Before the ceremony, a splendid breakfast was given by Mr. Delvyn ; and, at its conclusion, the happy pair left town in a chariot and four, to pass their honey-moon at the seat of the bride's father, in Kent. The splendour of the equipages and appointments attracted particular notice, as did the dress and extreme beauty of the blushing bride. We understand the bridal veil alone cost a thousand guineas."

Among the numberless paragraphs of a nature similar to the foregoing, which, towards the close of our London seasons, crowd the columns of the fashionable newspapers,—in which every thing is described as radiant with joy, and happiness, and accomplished love,—how many are true? If the altar of St. George's Church could speak,—if it could describe the various tones of agony and suppressed despair in which many of the vows breathed before it are uttered ;—if

the trembling limbs and quivering lips, ascribed to virgin diffidence,—if the tears which are laid to the account of filial or sisterly sensibility,—if all these were traced to their real causes,—if this description were exactly made,—I fear the answer to be given to the question I have proposed would include a fearfully small proportion of the aggregate mass. ‘If St. George’s altar could speak’—alas ! how many are there who sigh and shudder at the idea ! How many are there who look to the scene which took place there, with wonder at their own nerve, which, prepared as it had been, supported them through its course ;—who thank the conventional opinions I have alluded to above, for the protection and shelter which they gave to the emotions which it was impossible wholly to suppress ! The ‘Revelations of St. George’s Altar’ would, indeed, be a chapter in the

history of English society, which would lay bare as many pangs of strong suffering,—which would open vistas into as many and as gloomy paths of crime, and its attendant agony and remorse, as do the records of the coarser iniquities and grosser passions chronicled in the calendars of Newgate. The suffering is of a more exalted nature; the crime of a more refined and less revolting cast; but I question whether the guilt can, in strict justice, be considered less. I am very certain that the suffering is, in proportion as it is finer and more polished, more cutting and severe.

There cannot well be in nature two things, so alike in externals, which are so utterly dissimilar in essence and in fact, as a reluctant marriage, and a marriage of mutual affection. In the one, the inward heart rebounds in answer to the outward symbols—it

promises with joy and with truth. The marriage-vow is only an embodying into words of its own fondest and most ardent wishes. The happiness, and the gaiety arising from happiness,—(a feeling so different from mere and common gaiety, that a word ought to be invented to express it,)—are in unison with its inmost feelings, and seem to be caused by them, from their very superabundance and excess. The bride quits a happy home, in happiness, and to greater happiness.

But, the reluctant bride—what a contrast does her heart present! The vow *she* makes seems to her as an insult and a mockery; she swears that she will love a being towards whom her feelings are little short of hate. Bitterness and disappointment rankle within her heart. Every word of the ritual is a step in her progress towards despair. It

closes—and happiness is cut off from her for ever. The altercations relative to the marriage itself, have of late shaken even the early feelings of her filial love, and of her youthful home. The subject began in fear and anxiety; it continued in sorrow and in pain; it has now reached its climax in agony and in despair. How is it that hearts do not burst in the intensity of the conflict?

By what I have said, my readers will readily surmise that the paragraph I have quoted came under the more numerous class,—that the marriage which it recorded and announced was an ill-assorted and unwilling one,—that it began in anguish to one party, and ended in bitterness to both. They would be quite right. The marriage *was* an ill-assorted one; for the characters of those who formed it were wholly dissimilar; their tempers were different; and the attach-

ment (I can scarcely call it love) on one side was repaid, not with distaste merely, but with contempt also on the other. Woe to the marriage in which a disdainful feeling exists on the woman's side!—woe to him towards whom it is felt!—double, treble, tenfold woe to her who feels it!

In Blanch Delvyn this feeling existed, and strongly. Her good qualities and her bad,—her talents, her attainments, her beauty, her warmth of feeling,—all would lead to it alike. If she had had less ardour of sentiment, and less strength of mind, she might probably have been as unhappy; but this feeling of scorn for him she was about to marry, almost for herself, because she was about to do so, would not have existed. She would have been wretched; but pride would not have soured the milk of human kindness within her breast; she would not have had, as she

now had, a sort of feeling of being at war with all mankind. This may appear to be an exaggerated expression; but the sensation of dereliction, of non-community of feeling, which every woman in her situation must experience, becomes in a strong and proud mind the angered and embittered sentiment which I have ascribed to her.

I may almost say, indeed, that a thorough revolution had been operated in her character by the progress and completion of this match. She was a person formed for enjoyment; of a gay temper, as well as of great capabilities of happiness. If she had married a man whom she esteemed and loved, those capabilities would have been called forth and satisfied; and the gaiety and brilliancy of temper would have remained. She was, indeed, originally one of the most fascinating and delightful persons in the world. She

was extremely lovely, though not of a calm or regular style of beauty. She was of shorter stature than the most perfect standard for a woman ; but her form was exquisitely cast, combining lightness, and delicacy of outline, with the brightest and richest filling up. To the gay and buoyant liveliness of youth, she joined an archness, even an *espièglerie* of manner—a smile lurking in the glance of the eye, and rippling upon the beautiful lip—which betrayed a kind and degree of talent seldom so much developed in such early youth. Yet he who would, from these indications, have deduced that she allowed the deeper and stronger feelings to be drowned beneath the bright and sparkling spray of wit and gaiety, would have been far wrong indeed, in his estimate of her character. On the contrary, she was one of that class of persons—a class much more nume-

rous than is generally supposed—who, being naturally of joyous, elastic, and lively temperaments, give their apparent energies to the light surfaces of things; and yet, who possess, perhaps even more than, certainly as much as, any other description of women, the fire of strong feeling always burning beneath these bright but less ardent coruscations—awaiting only object and occasion to call it into vivid (and to some, unexpected) life. Women of this description are calculated, in a most eminent degree, to give and to experience happiness, if united to a man whom they love, and whom they respect; but they are also calculated to experience and to cause the most extreme misery, if they be bound to a husband whom they dislike, and hold in slight esteem.

That poor Blanch's marriage was ill-assorted, will be sufficiently apparent, when I

say that Lord Montore is universally represented to have been a man of limited parts, of cold sullen temper, and of reserved haughtiness of manner, without either solidity or elevation of character to bear it out. There could not, by possibility, have been found qualities more repugnant than these to the open generous spirit, the warm feeling, and unguarded manner, the lively and ready wit, and the keen strong sense of ridicule, of Blanch Delvyn. She held him lightly for his want of sense; she laughed at him for his pompous assumption of it; she despised him for his narrow and undignified ways of thinking; she hated him for his morose and clouded temper. Was not this marriage ill-assorted?

That it was unwilling on her part—that it took place in direct consequence of the repeated, the incessant urging of her father,

and worldly man,—who loved his daughter dearly when his own interest or ease did not intervene; but who sacrificed her, without pause or scruple, when they did—being himself with the idea, which did not deceive him, that she had made ‘a good match,’—that her consent to the marriage was wrung from her by his importunities, apparent throughout all her letters—and, indeed, would seem to have been suspected pretty generally by all who had any opportunity of judging. The following are expressions of Mr. Blount, who was an eyewitness of the ceremony—they differ somewhat from those of the public account.

* * * * * There were a great many people at breakfast,—too many, I think; but the tone of the whole thing was display and ostentation, which, you know, Lord Montreuil, and Delvyn has no objection to. I

...e bride was of my way of think-
 ...e subject; for she did not eat a
 ..., nor speak a word, and looked
 ...ghosts roused from their graves
 ...ment. There she sat, with an un-
 ...norsel upon her plate; looking as
 ...her own veil, and as silent and mo-
 ...s a statue. You might almost have
 ...for one, indeed, if it had not been
 ...lour and motion of her fine dark
 ...h spoke—Heaven only knows how
 ...ings and passions!—Sorrow, and
 ...l a little bit of scorn, and a large
 ...ike (hate is not a pretty word) ce-
 ...id jointed by something not very
 ...om despair. Was not this a nice
 ...r the expression of a bride's eyes,
 ...wedding morning? Seriously, I
 ...from the bottom of my heart.
 ...she values that empty, pompous,

make use of her's at his just price; and that, I think, is a sufficient load of unhappiness for the survivors of nineteen. I had not seen her for a year and a half: she was then the gayest, most agreeable, fascinating creature imaginable:—all animation and fire, a great deal of wit, and an infinity of most varied conversation. Now she looks as if she had become a ~~she~~ Trappist, and was under a vow never to speak or smile again. If you had but seen the look she gave M., as he handed her into the carriage to go to church, you would have said there was no necessity for her speaking. Any thing so expressive I never beheld; and how Lord M. did not interpret it, is past my comprehension. But that fellow is as impassive and impenetrable as if he were cut out of ice:—it must be the ice of muddy water, you will say,—and 'faith I think so.

“ Well, sir, we went through the streets, all covered with favours; ourselves, and our carriages, and our servants, and our horses; ‘all very grand and fine,’ as the story-books say. Do you know, I almost feared some explosion during the ceremony; but poor Blanch was too statue-like for any such thing. She was like an automaton, wound up to go through a certain succession of movements, and not able to stir out of the arranged set till it was over. I am sure, she had, by dint of strength of mind, screwed herself and her nerves up to a certain extent of endurance; and endure it she did,—just bowing at the responses, and receiving the congratulations (!) of her friends afterwards also with silent and almost unconscious bows. Whether she fainted on her way down into the country with her bridegroom, or not, as I was not bodkin, I cannot say;—but all went off very

decorously in church ; and ‘ the happy pair ’ were boxed up together in their post-chaise, and off they whirled. I thought, as they drove off, that there had been enough done that morning, to cause a heart-ache hereafter to more than her who feels it now. And yet I don’t know—Blanch has excellent principles ; and I never heard of her having any attachment elsewhere. That would, indeed, have completed it.

“ Delvyn carried it all off swimmingly. He could not but know in his heart, that he was acting the part of Agamemnon, at a sacrifice worse, because more lasting, than that of Iphigenia ; and yet nothing could be more smirking and unconscious, and full of happiness and family *bienséances*, and all the stock paraphernalia and mummary of a happy father.—Pah ! such selfishness and hypo-

crisy really almost sours one with the world, and casts a bitter colouring upon society. D. has not even the excuse of being in love; which, I suppose, Lord M. would tell you he is—Lord help us!”

CHAPTER II.

*“ Nurse. Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I
nursed :*

*An’ I might live to see thee marry’d once,
I have my wish.”*

ROMEO AND JULIET.

MR. BLOUNT was perfectly right in his conjecture, that it was only by a strong effort of self-command that the bride supported herself through the ceremony which sealed her fate. She had schooled herself to it by preparation and looking onward, that she might not betray any degree of emotion derogatory to the respect she owed herself. She succeeded, as has been shown, in the repression and concealment of these feelings ; but, like the fox of the Spartan boy, they fed

upon her very vitals from the effort. And, when seated in the carriage by the side of her bridegroom,—when to have given vent to the tears, which now almost choked her, would have been a relief for which she would have given worlds,—she still exerted this violent effort of self-control, lest she should expose her weakness before him by whom these sorrows were caused. More powerful than the Danish king in the tradition, she bade the tide of emotion to go no further, and it stayed.

There could not have been selected any place wherein to pass the ‘honey moon’ so little acceptable to Blanch as that to which they were now going. Lord Montore had no place within an easy distance of town, which had caused Mr. Delvyn’s to be chosen. But this had been Blanch’s early home: here she had passed all the happy days of

her life; the thousand associations and ties of childhood were intertwined with every thing around. The nursery in which she had spent her happy infancy, the "own room" in which she had passed her still happier youth,—all the memorials and the effects of her education, and of the enjoyments which she had derived from it—her music, her books, her drawings—all these remained in the apartment which had been her's, just as they were accustomed to meet her eye on her return home every summer. Alas! under what different auspices did she return home now! Home! it was no longer her home. She was here, now, as a transitory guest,—not in the home of her youth, of her heart. Recollections, it is true, still bound her to it; but hope was gone for ever. She shuddered to look forward; she dreaded to look back; the present afforded no green

spot to rest upon. The waters of unhappiness rose around her on every side, and there was no ark to save her.

Blanch was much beloved at the Grange. She had taken advantage of the opportunities of a *dame de paroisse*, to be the means of extensive benevolence, and, what is still more appreciated by its objects, of personal kindness to the poor of the neighbouring village. Through this village she had now to pass. Its inhabitants had been informed that 'Miss Blanch' had made a great marriage, and was coming to spend her newly-wedded days among them. Accordingly, at the extremity of the village, Lord and Lady Montore were met, and preceded through it, by a troop of young girls, scattering flowers before their path, and breathing blessings, both 'loud and deep,' upon the bride. The bells pealed out as merrily as the stoutest arms in


the parish could pull them ; the old people came out before their doors, and waved their hats, and cried ' God bless her ! ' as the carriage passed. Every thing was jubilee and joy, except poor Blanch's heart ;—that was aching and dark indeed.

At first she endeavoured to acknowledge these testimonies of kindness and attachment, by smiles, and bows, and thanks ; but, with every step that they advanced, the effort became more and more painful and difficult, and at last too much for her altogether. Evening was fast closing in—it was something more than dusk, and she took advantage of the failing light to draw her veil close over her face—to throw herself back into a corner of the carriage—and, for the first time giving way to her feelings after the long and harassing day, to weep without restraint, profusely, bitterly.

The circumstances of the moment would, in any case, sufficiently account for her emotion, to her companion;—but the quality of that emotion, the deep sinking of the soul, the dark barrenness of prospect, the feeling, in a word, of despair, which at last overcame her long-preserved composure—these, indeed, he was far from guessing,—he was incapable of estimating at their just severity, if he had guessed them.

It was with these feelings, that Blanch entered the home of her early days. It was the first time that any thing but gladness had arisen from that return. The contrast and its cause pressed on her heavily. That which ought to be the beginning of a new era of happiness to all—which is so, in fact, to many—was to her the closing of that state for ever, and the dawning of a different existence. She was indeed, a ‘Mourning Bride.’ Only

the year preceding, she had been bridesmaid to the chief companion and chosen friend of her youth. That marriage was an happy one;—it was one of fond affection on both sides, and there was no wounded prudence to interfere with the choice of love. The contrast between her marriage and that of her friend had more than once struck her already; she felt this more fully than ever, now that she was in a place where she had enjoyed so much of that friend's society—and where she had witnessed the progress of the attachment, which had ended in an union so happy. She had lamentably felt the absence of the support of this excellent and amiable person during the struggles she had lately undergone. Her friend was abroad with her husband; she had therefore had to support the conflict in her own mind, solely by its own strength, without any sympathy or aid.



The honey-moon—the sweet month—was to Blanch the bitterest of her life. A thousand little circumstances, incidental to the place where it was passed, excited and added to those feelings of gloom and pain, which had no need of extraneous aggravation. The sentiment, hackneyed as the citation of its expression is,*—

“ _____ nessun maggior dolore,
 Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
 Nella miseria _____ ”

was always present to her!—nay, more; for the very scene of the past happiness was that of the present pain.

It may be supposed that an event like the arrival of a newly-married couple, and of such a couple, gave plentiful employment to

* When a phrase, or a passage, becomes hackneyed by quotation, it is always, I think, in proportion to the justness of the thought, and the felicity of the expression.

the gossips of the village, old and young. The bride was the daughter of 'the Squire'—the bridegroom was a Lord:—what more could be needed to give zest to the conversation, commonly incident upon a honeymoon? And yet it *had* additional interest;—for the bride had lived among them from her infancy, and was deeply beloved by all. The young child whom they had petted, had grown in their affections as in years; and admiration, esteem, respect, became mingled with their former love. She had an open hand, and open manner,—which latter quality doubles the former in attractiveness and value. She was ever ready, not only to relieve, but to enter into, to appreciate, to go along with, the sorrows and sufferings of her humble friends. And, what they prized nearly as much—what certainly was of more fascinating, if not of such sterling value,

—she was always wont, at seasons of gaiety, to assist, to preside over, during her more girlish years even to mix in,—the festivities of the time. To those of my readers who have ever lived in the country, in England, I need not say how eminently popular (in its best sense) such a disposition was calculated to make her. My other readers may take my word for it. Let them figure to themselves any extent of it, and they will not go wrong.

Of course, it had been the wish and the prayer of the good folks on whose feelings I have been dwelling, that “Miss Blanch should be well married.” Now, as it would seem, she was well married; and she had come to pass her bridal days among them. Many and minute, therefore, were the enquiries which were made in the lower regions of the house, concerning the inmates

above; and great and anxious was the expectation with which the Sunday morning following their arrival was ushered in. Every Sunday had Blanch, in her maiden days, appeared in the family pew; and, after service, had a good-humoured word, or a kind enquiry, for most of the group collected in the church-yard for her to pass. But *this* Sunday she did not appear.

Great was the disappointment, and multifarious were the surmises to which this unexpected circumstance gave rise. On the second Sunday, however, she came. But, as an old dame pithily observed, "she might as well have stayed at home—for, instead of Miss Blanch's sweet smiling face, one could see nothing but white lace, bonnet, and veil, and what not; and, after church, instead of the smile to one and the word to another, as it used to be, she only

bowed, bowed, bowed, like the China figure on the parson's mantelpiece:—if this comes of getting married, I think she had better have remained single, for my part.”

Nor was this worthy gossip the only one who felt, if they did not so loudly express, disappointment at the change. The old groom—one of those privileged fixtures, which grow, like inseparable ivy, round the corner-stone and roof-tree of the house—the old groom felt somewhat indignant at his pains being all thrown away in bringing Titania, Miss Blanch's favourite mare, into such superb condition to receive her as My lady. “One might almost see one's face in her coat,” muttered old John despondingly, one morning as he fed his beautiful charge—“one might almost see one's face in her coat, it's so smooth, and so shining, and she's in the finest spirit and condi-

tion that ever was, and yet my lady has never once been on her back. Why, last year, she had been half over the country before she had been here so long. It's a thousand pities; for no lady in the land has a seat on horseback to compare to her!"

But there was one, an old servant at the Grange, to whom the feelings of all the rest towards their young mistress were but as a shadow—this was *the nurse*! The nurse! what a crowd of recollections cluster, in every bosom, round that name! It is, as it were, the ball round which all the threads of early feeling and affection are winded. That heart must indeed have been hardened by the current of the world, which does not soften at the remembrance of its nursery days! How often do we paint to ourselves the quaint and antiquated figure which answers to that name in our memories respec-

and, with a mingled smile and sigh, think of her indulgence, and her fondness, and her authority so often rebelled against, and her stories so often repeated, yet still so eagerly asked for and listened to,—in short, of all that cloud of atoms, small in themselves, and unregarded at the time, but which in riper years forms one of the chief, and certainly one of the purest and the best of the treasures of our heart's memory! I never should feel any respect for that heart in which such feelings had no existence.

But the feelings on the other side are always far stronger and deeper. They are probably the most powerful, short of maternal love, which exist in the human bosom. In England, it is true, the feeling of fosterage is by no means so strong as it is among the Scotch, and the Irish especially. Among the

latter, indeed, I question whether it does not sometimes exceed even the love of offspring itself,—extreme as, in those ardent natures, that affection always is. In the present instance, however, the foster-feeling was of an intensity by no means common. Blanch had been old Sarah's only nursling in the family. Being an only child, her undivided care, and love had been devoted to her; and, as Mrs. Delvyn died during her daughter's infancy, the minor duties of maternity had devolved upon, and been fulfilled by her nurse. She had been her attendant, indeed, till about two years previous to the period of which I am speaking; when the late hours of a London season necessitated Blanch to have some one about her younger and less infirm than poor old Sarah had now become. She was, therefore, settled in a cottage, stored with every comfort, within a quarter of a mile of the

house; and if there be any truth in the description I have given of Blanch's disposition, I need not say how constant a walk it was to Nurse's Cottage."

Every year when Blanch went to town, the old woman blessed her at parting; and, in true accordance with the spirit of the dear old sisterhood, her chief, her first, her last wish was always the same, and expressed in very nearly the same words, as that which I have quoted as the epigraph to this chapter.

Sarah's wish was now accomplished. She had seen her young mistress, her 'child,' as she was accustomed to call her, and to feel towards her,—she had seen her married, and greatly, and nobly. Yet I question whether, after a short time, she would not rather have repealed its accomplishment, had so doing depended on her will. With that gift of intuition which women, especially of her age

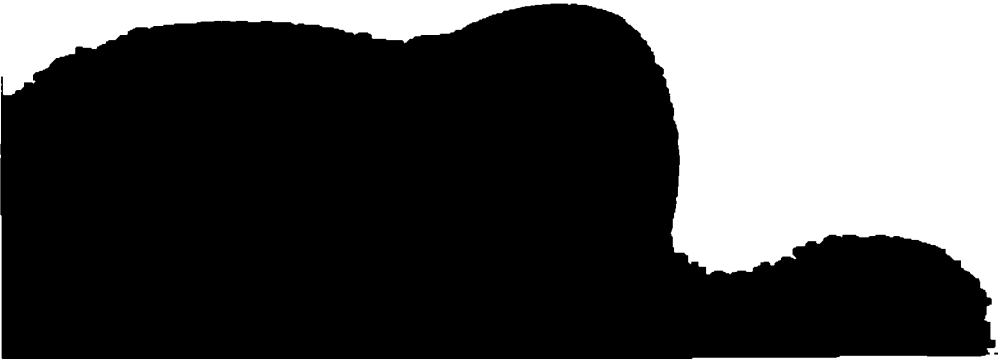
and office, have into such matters, she had not seen her young lady thrice, before she was convinced that her feelings towards Lord Montore were not, and never had been, those of love. Of course, both the good sense and good taste of Blanch induced her to avoid the subject, with Sarah, as much as was possible. But at such a time, and with one who stood in the position to her which Sarah did, it was not possible to do so entirely : and what she did not say was fully as influential as what she did, in guiding the keen-sighted old woman to her conclusion."

A visit which the bride and bridegroom paid her together, after they had been at the Grange a few days, sufficed to remove any doubt, if indeed any remained. I cannot say that Sarah was at all prepossessed in Lord Montore's favour. It is probably a very unfair feeling, but it is one which an

doubtedly exists, especially in women, to have but slender esteem towards a slighted lover—and, bridegroom as Lord Montore was, Sarah regarded him in that light. He addressed a few sentences to her, which were meant to be gracious; but they lacked that freedom and cordliness of tone and manner, which throw completely out of view all appearance, of the consciousness at least, of condescension. Now Lord Montore seemed so perfectly aware of the extent to which he was condescending, that he ceased to be at all so in fact.—The show killed the reality. Still Sarah could not but feel strong interest, if nothing else, towards one in whose hands Blanch's fate was placed. That which was to her the dearest, the most valuable, the best of all created things, was indissolubly bound to the man who stood before her. He, then, was the husband, for whom she had so prayed for her

dear lady ! Oh ! that he might be *such* a one as she had prayed for. “ My lord,” said she, “ you are the most fortunate man in the world ; it is your own fault if you are not the happiest also. You cannot know, my lord, as yet—*no one* can know, as I do, what a treasure you have gained in my dear, dear child ! Her heart and her temper, my lord, I know even better than she does herself ; they have not their equals in this world. I shall look to you, my lord,” continued the old woman, assuming the playful authority to which her age and former station entitled her—“ I shall look to you, my lord, for my child’s happiness :—you have a great trust ; I hope you are conscious of it, and worthy of it : but you must be both, or Miss Blanch would not have married you. God bless you together !”

The old woman used to tell the story of



this visit afterwards; and she used to add:
“I thought, at the time, the match would never turn out well; for my lord did not seem half to deserve her, and value her as he ought to do:—and for her, poor thing! while I was speaking, she kept fondling and kissing my little grandchild;—and when they went away, I found the little girl was all wet with tears—and *she* had not been crying, I know.”

CHAPTER III.

“~~Her feelings may be better~~
 Shewn in the following copy of her letter.”
 BYRON.

My readers must, I am sure, have anticipated, to use old Sarah's words, that “the match could never turn out well.” They will, I doubt not, expect the next act in the drama of *Marriage à-la-Mode*;—disgust, and repulsion on one side—wooing, fondness, attraction on another—the struggle between duty and passion—between unassisted principle and a tempted heart—the declining effort—the ultimate fall.—all these things, I doubt not, my readers expect now to find detailed in full. If they do so expect, their

expectation will be balked. Among the letters before me, there are many which relate to this portion of Blanch's life; but I shall not give one of them, nor the substance of one of them. It is not my purpose to set forth the sophistry of the lover—sophistry, indeed, which, from the unalterable nature of the case, is and must be so light and frail, that one breath of common sense would blow it into the air; but which, nevertheless, so constantly remains unshattered, from its being the wish and endeavour of the party to whom it is addressed to be deceived;—of this I shall not give one word. Neither shall I represent the more dangerous temptation arising from the contrast between indifference, coldness, harshness—and the kind, fervent, devoted, unremitting attention and wooing, which were opposed to them. My purpose in giving to the world this

ration which the course I was pursuing would, in all probability, cause me soon you, operated as a check and a chill upon my heart, at the moment I had determined upon adopting it. But having taken my determination, I acted upon it at once. You know, I am not very apt to delay in the one, when once I have made the other. Do not think, however, that I acted without consideration: I may have determined and done wrongly; but certainly, neither hastily nor blindly. I knew all that I must sacrifice, and yet the sacrifice is made. Oh, Margaret! how little did I, at one time, think that such a sacrifice would ever have been needed from me;—how little did I think that my fate would be what it has been!—but the die is cast—and it is not I alone that have thrown it for myself. My father—but I will not speak of him now. I rejoice he has not lived to see this; for

what would his reproaches to his own heart have been !

“The wretchedness I have undergone for the last year passes expression—I have not expressed it, even to you. Constant dissensions from petty and mean causes ; a coarse mind displayed in coarser manners ; such was the picture of my home ; such was he to whom I was linked—to whom, thank Heaven ! I am linked no longer. He is a rich man, he is a man of rank—for this my father chose him ; he is a man of no feeling, of small sense, and less education ; of low tastes and habits ; of sullen and obstinate manners ; of contracted and cold heart ; for this I loathed him—for this I have left him for ever !

“I never loved him ; I never could have loved him ; but if I could but have esteemed him, though ever so little, I should have been contented. Nay, if I could even have felt

towards him that kindness which mere good nature always excites, he never would have had reason to complain of my conduct towards him. Whatever feelings I might have had to repress—whatever temptations I might have had to struggle against, I would have repressed them ; I should have prevailed in the struggle. But the heart and the temper of this man were as unfeeling and as clouded, as his mind was coarse and mean. What hope could there be (happiness I do not take into the account, but) of peace with such a man? If he had possessed either good sense or good feeling, the one might, in some degree, have compensated for the absence of the other ; but, equally destitute of both, there was no help nor hope indeed! Heaven can bear me witness, that, on our marriage, after the first agony of disappointment and despair was past, I tried to make

the best of my fate and of his. But I found no one spot, in either his mind or his heart, whereon to build: all was equally barren, inhospitable, and desolate. He knew that my consent had been wrung from me by my father; he knew that I had never misled him as to my sentiments, or as to my opinion of his. It was he, he alone, who had caused this marriage, so hateful to me; and yet he resented my having married him without loving him, as though it had been my own free choice and deed.

“One aggravation of my lot, I was, however, spared; I did not become the mother of that man’s children. I shudder when I reflect upon its having been possible. I almost believe it would have destroyed the strongest feeling of nature, maternal love, of which I feel the capability so powerful within me. I almost believe it would have destroyed this,

if he had been the father of my child! At all events, the conflict between the opposite feelings would have been extreme. You can scarcely conceive—you, who are so blessed in your home—how much I dreaded it; how thankful I am for having been spared it.

“Of the choice I have now made I need not speak to you. You saw the commencement of our attachment; you warned me against its increase. Had you, my kind and constant Mentor, remained in London, I know not how it might have ended: As it is, I cannot wish it had ended otherwise. Were the step to take again, I would take it. The regret which cuts me to the heart is, that we did not meet sooner—that, before we met, I was forced into that accursed—(I can use no milder phrase)—into that accursed marriage.

“Our present plans are to remain at this

easy distance, from England, till the bars which are still between us shall have been removed. We have reason to hope this will be in a short time. We shall then, probably, proceed on our travels. Meanwhile, write to me; I am sure you *will* write to me, dear Margaret. I shall, indeed, be anxious till I see your dear hand-writing once more."

Such was the letter which this unhappy, misguided, creature wrote to her dearest friend, on her elopement from her husband's house. I need scarcely warn my readers against supposing that I concur in its self-blinding sophistry. I only set before them her own statement of her own conduct, and its motives:—its consequences have yet to be told. Poor Blanch! she indeed deceived herself—she looked only to one

side—to what she would escape, from, not to what she would have to endure. She was exactly the woman to whom the consequences of such a step would be the most bitter. The very strength and pride of her spirit would make them so the more. The slights and scorns of the world are in a ten-fold degree galling to those who despise it; nay, in the very proportion in which that contempt is strong and sincere, is the feeling of humiliation at being condemned; and shunned by the very objects which excite it. And the world, in such cases, makes no distinctions; it draws no lines; it will see no differences. Indeed it cannot see (and it would not care to do so, if it could) the peculiar circumstances in any individual case. It knows only what is done; and not what has led to the doing. The ultimate act is against to all; the propelling and

afflicting causes are hidden from all—except from those whose hearts would have guessed them without it. In Blanch's case—but I will not forestall the current of my story.

I do not purpose to set before my readers any thing relating to the period which immediately followed her divorce, and second marriage. It was, probably, since her first, the happiest she had known. How long this happiness lasted, and what caused it to cease, will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

"My peace is vanished,
My heart is sore."—FAUST.

[The following are the letters of Mr. Blount to which I alluded in the note prefixed to this story. They are dated in the summer subsequent to that in which the last extract from his Diary was written.]

"Spa, August —, 1844

"MY DEAR FREDWIN,—

"Who do you think is here? One of whom I have heard me speak with strong deep pity; whose qualities to me so fascinating; whose words to me with such painful interest

rest. In a word, on my arrival here, almost the first names I saw in the subscription book were those of Mr. and Mrs. Lumley ! I doubted at first whether or not I should go and see them. I had always had a sort of lounging London acquaintance with him : how well I knew *her* some few years ago, you are fully aware. At first, I feared that she might not like to see, in her present situation, a friend of her early years, and that it was better to avoid the painful reminiscences which the renewal of such an acquaintance could not fail to occasion. But again, I thought, that as she certainly would know that I was here, she might believe that I shunned her in her fallen state from those cold, heartless motives, which have given rise to the proverb, "A friend in need." I have no wife either, the necessary consideration for whom might restrain me from act-

ing as good feeling would naturally prompt;
so I went to see Lumley and his wife.

“It is now about five years since, I first knew her. I passed some weeks, in the summer of 1785, at her uncle's house, in the country; and you know how rapidly acquaintance ripens into intimacy in such society. This was the year before she married; but Lord Montore was also there, and, though it was quite evident she hated him, I saw how it must end. Her father was in embarrassed circumstances, and Montore was rolling in wealth; and it was plain that she would be another sacrifice to Mammon. This perhaps gave her additional interest in my eyes; but she was abundantly interesting without any such extrinsic aid. She was of a bright French style of beauty, with the most sparkling gipsy eyes that ever were seen—coal-black hair flying in every direc-

tion over her deep clear cheeks, and a mouth where the very spirit of archness and buoyancy seemed to have chosen his home. And yet there was an occasional cloud passed over the sunshine of her countenance—"a dark hour," or rather a dark moment, which, while it now and then lessened the vividness, added vastly to the interest, of her beauty. As the French say, *elle avait de l'esprit comme un démon*—her wit flashed always with brilliancy, and often with keenness, or perhaps rather, to use another French word, with *malice*. But, in conformity with the beautiful index of her mind, at times a touch of true nature and feeling would send the tears springing to her eyes, and a sigh struggling to her throat, which shewed that all this gaiety and brightness covered, but did not destroy, sentiments, or the capability of sentiments, far warmer and deeper,—that

'this lovely casket was not without its jewel
'of price—a heart.

You can well understand that such a
being was calculated strongly to impress
a very young man, such as I then was;
and there were additional circumstances
which added to these natural causes. In the
first place, I thought that few or none of
those around her *understood* her as I did.
They seemed to regard her merely as a gay
'glittering creature, calculated to shine in
worldly society; or, if some of them had any
higher idea of her, it was merely on account
of the wit which they had felt, and conse-
quently dreaded. I, on the other hand, saw,
as I have said, the existence and the value of
her less apparent qualities; which gave me
a sort of self-satisfaction with my own sa-
guacity, and for which (as I did not fail to
let it appear to her) she felt flattered and

gratified. . . . The northern coruscations which exist only in the coldest atmosphere, and the summer lightning which springs from heat, are to the unpenetrating eye almost undistinguishable from each other: what most thought belonged to the frozen zone, I clearly saw was caused by far warmer temperature. But, notwithstanding all this, I was *not* in love with her; and, in despite of vanity, I well knew that she was not in the least so with me. The truth is, that at that time I had, "other tow on my distaff,"—I was in love with somebody else, and she was aware that I was so. This caused me to know her far better—I may almost say it made me more intimate with her,—than if there had been the blindness of love on my side, and the embarrassment of love on her's. She saw that I appreciated, esteemed, and valued her; she knew that the attention I paid her

was totally free from selfishness, and she was more frank and trusting to me, in consequence, than it would otherwise have been possible for one of her sex and age to have been to one of mine. I certainly *should have been* in love with her, if it had not been for the particular circumstances to which I have alluded; and she was quite conscious of this, which served to add cordiality to the unreserve of our intercourse. We used to take long walks and rides, in which she was *entiers* with —— and me. I believe she was the only person in the world who would not have been *Madame de Trop* to both of us. It was at these times chiefly, that those indications of deeper thought and feeling would break forth. Speaking in general terms, she would inveigh with all the bitterness of anticipated misery on what I plainly saw she meant would be her own lot. Then again

she would pass her hand across her brow, and tossing back her floating hair, as if in so doing she shook these gloomy thoughts from her, as a horse flings the water from his mane, she would burst forth with all the wildness of *spurred* spirits (if I may so speak) into some of her gayest and most brilliant flights—as if the sky-bird could foresee its being encaged, and soared more loftily in the air to enjoy it to the full, while it *was* free.

“ I never have seen her but once since; and that was at her marriage with Lord Montore. From what I have said, you will readily conceive that I was more pained than surprised when I heard it was about to take place; and again, I was more pained than surprised when I afterwards heard of her elopement and subsequent divorce. I say that I was not strongly surprised at this last occurrence, not from there being the slightest

degree even of levity in her conduct or manner, still less in her mind, but because I thought that she too nearly resembled the simile to which I have likened her, above the wild bird of the heavens—not to break through a cage, which to her, I well knew, would be insupportable. It would have indeed caused me the very greatest surprise, if I had heard of her being guilty of any misconduct, and that she remained with her husband; for I was certain that whatever might be her errors and her faults, concealment and hypocrisy would never rank among them.

“ I went, accordingly, to call on the Lumleys. When I entered the room, he advanced towards me, and took me by the hand; feeling, apparently, grateful for my coming at a moment, and in a place, where they were in a certain degree shunned. He did not

say this; however, in direct terms, but his manner, "I thought, indicated it; for it had that grace and suavity which no one knows how to assume better than himself when he chooses; but which he by no means always, or even generally, *does* choose to assume. In the mean time, she had risen from the sofa, on which she was sitting, and had come forward a step or two to meet me. She wore a large bonnet, with lace hanging down from the edge, which partly overshadowed her face; but, as I fixed my eyes upon her, she glanced at me one look, and much, indeed, did it speak. It seemed as if in that moment the retrospect of years passed across her mind—that she thought of her state when she knew me last—of the intervening time—of her present condition—and as if she knew that the same train of thought must be then in *my* mind also, and entreated me to judge

her kindly, and to spare her. It takes long to describe, even imperfectly as I have done it, the concentrated expression of that look ; but it was the work of a moment. It passed away as suddenly as it had appeared ; and as she stretched out her hand to me, she smiled brightly, and spoke fluently, to welcome an old friend. But this was only the lip-greeting ; the other was the recognition of the heart.

“ I found her a good deal altered, and yet not as I had anticipated she would be. I thought she would have been pale and sunken, and that her wild spirits would have been changed into debility and sadness. But it was not so. Her person, undoubtedly, was wasted ; but, instead of yielding to this, she concealed, in great measure, by the little arts of dress in which women are so skilled, the work of grief upon her beautiful form.

Her cheek was a little fallen in, but there was a delicate tint of rouge, which prevented its paleness from being apparent, and yet was too slight, and too skilfully applied, to show that it was strongly needed. There were some points, however, which spoke more plainly. The lips were thin, and had lost both their colour and freshness; and the eye, —true revealer, let what will be said, of the mind,—showed, like the surface of water, the clouds which passed over the spirit; and when it did flash and shine, it was plain that it was by effort, not spontaneously.

“She talked much, and with great liveliness; but said nothing of old times. She spoke of Spa, and its rides, and its waters; and where they had been to on the Continent, and where they were going to—of Italy, of Germany, of the Rhine.—In short, her conversation would have been indicative

of gaiety and enjoyment, had it not appeared that she feared to pause lest remembrance should intrude—that by unceasing talking of the present she hoped to exclude the past. I could not help thinking, also, that she stood in great fear of her husband. She looked towards him once or twice, as if in dread lest he should think that she was committing herself, and that she would suffer severely for it, as soon as they were alone. He was extremely civil and even courteous to me; but there was, in his general manner, a strong tinge of moroseness exceedingly perceptible, which, as I had heard, and, indeed, partly had seen, was inherent in his disposition, and now seemed aggravated by the circumstances of their situation. I should not have thought Lumley a man much calculated to have gained the affections of one like her; but having once done so, I can very

well understand that his influence over her
 would be great. He is a fine dark-looking
 man, but his eye has a sternness which is
 even unpleasant, and there is an expression
 about his mouth which plainly bespeaks ill-
 temper. At the same time, he is undoubt-
 edly a person of a powerful and cultivated
 mind; and I can perfectly conceive that it
 might be extremely seductive to a brilliant
 and sensitive creature, such as she was, to
 perceive his haughtiness of manner changed
 towards her into a softness and deference,
 which are doubly effective when practised by
 one to whose ordinary manners they are
 foreign. But, however this might have been,
 it is certain nothing of the kind exists now.
 He spoke to her once or twice with a sharp-
 ness evidently restrained only by my pre-
 sence; and I could see her shrink, when he
 fixed his eye upon her, in a manner which

shewed how much she dreaded his severity—I fear I ought to say, unkindness.

“ When I went away, she again shook me cordially by the hand, and hoped that we should meet often while I stay here ; and L. expressed himself to the same effect, graciously enough. To-day I received from him an invitation to dinner next week ; and I certainly shall go, for I truly am deeply interested concerning her. I fear she is very unhappy. There never was a woman in her situation, who was not more or less so ; but I am afraid that she has none of those consolations and alleviations of her fate, which spring from the fondness and devotion of him for whom she has incurred it. Of all women, I should think her the least able to bear a lot like this. With such ardent affections and keen feelings, it must, indeed, be *dreadful* to meet with unrequital, “ after

all that has come and gone." But, perhaps, I am doing him injustice. What I saw may be merely the effect of temporary ill-humour; and the disposition to generalize, of which you have so often accused me, may have led me into giving it more importance than is fairly its due—I hope it may be so.

* * * *

CHAPTER V.

As the pure mountain air becomes too pure
For feeble lungs to breathe, so the sick heart,
In its poor sensitiveness, cannot endure
To look on Nature in her pride:—the smart,
Which the great healer, Time, alone can cure,
Shrinks from those sights of grandeur, which impart
To healthful spirits, joy, and peace, and love
For fellow-man, and rev'rence for Above!

ANON.

My readers are, by this time, sufficiently well acquainted with Mr. Blount to see what a very dangerous feeling such pity as his must have been towards a woman like Mrs. Lumley. And that pity was much increased as he came to mix more in her society. He found that his anticipations were but too true, or rather that they had fallen far short of the

reality. After a little time, he began to live with the Lumleys a great deal. L., as it seemed, was wearied with the seclusion in which they were, in a degree, compelled to live; for, of course, they were not visited by married people; and the men who would willingly have come, were not always exactly those that he chose to receive. He felt this a good deal; and it caused, very much, that fretfulness and moroseness which speedily became undoubtedly apparent. He had been accustomed to live in society—he had shone in it; and had enjoyed, as much as any man, the *successes*, to use a French idiom, though not a French word, which he had met with there. When, therefore, his marriage secluded him from it, and the first flush of passion, which for the time repaid him, had passed away,—he began to feel, and then to show that he felt, the sacrifice he

had made ;—for he wanted *heart*. I say that he wanted heart; for, gracious Heaven! what must that man be who shews that *he* feels his petty sacrifice, if it deserves to be called so, to her who has abandoned *all* for *him*! But so it was; and poor Blanch was, of all women, she who would feel it the most. This, indeed, became soon manifest.

Mr. Blount became, as I have said, a constant guest at the Lumleys', and Blanch and he renewed their former intimacy. It is true, they spoke little, in direct terms, of the time they had passed together; but as they named the mutual friends who had contributed to render that period such a happy one, the mind could not fail to revert to the days themselves. Retracing together, at a comparatively distant period, former intercourse,—is a far stronger tie of union than even the intercourse itself was at the time;

or than its recollection would primarily seem to justify. But so it is: it is a point of community which makes the present intimacy greater than that which is its subject and its cause. And thus it was in the present instance.

It is the custom at Spa to hire the mountain-ponies of the place, and take long rides through the beautiful environs, over the stony roads of which these little creatures make their way with a security and rapidity which our English horses could not master on such ground. Mr. Blount used frequently to ride in this way with Lumley and his wife. By degrees, Mr. Lumley began to remain at home, well pleased, as it would seem, to be a free man for a few hours, and contented that she should go under their friend's guardianship. These *têtes-à-têtes* were, at first, rather irksome to both parties; but after

one or two of them had passed over, they became not only unembarrassed, but delightful. It almost seemed as if they had retrograded to the happy times when they were friends before, and that the clouds and storms of the intervening time had passed away, as though they had never been. But they *had* been: passion had been busy with the hearts of both of them; and shame, likewise, had mingled largely in her lot.

The country around Spa is beautiful; it is also of a very peculiar character. It consists, for the most part, of steep and abrupt hills, wanting, it is true, the height, but still having, in great measure, the character, of mountains. They are, generally, clothed with wood, and abound in little valleys, or rather "laps of land," with a pebbly brook brawling through the bottom, and bordered by narrow stripes of smooth green turf, in-

intervening between it and the wood. The
 paths which intersect this country are small
 and tangled, as wood-paths usually are; but,
 perhaps, on the very account of their gloom
 and boundedness, they give greater effect to
 the bursts of splendid prospect on which you
 frequently emerge, and even to the still,
 green, basins, if I may thus use the word,
 of which I have spoken. An air and a feel-
 ing of solitude, without desolation, reign
 among these hills, which are peculiarly sooth-
 ing and softly impressive. The breath of
 Nature awakens her delicate echoes in the
 heart, and ripples, but does not agitate, its
 surface. In scenes of sterner and more vast
 character, the pressure on the mind is of a
 sort from which many of us seek to escape;
 for none but hearts of the most perfect peace-
 fulness and purity can bear to meet and to
 analyze the sensations which are there inspired.

But in places of more gentle beauty the moral effect is of a correspondingly milder character. The calls for feeling are less strong and deep, and need, consequently, less command of heart (if I may thus speak), to answer them.

It was through such scenes that their rides commonly lay ; and latterly, as I have said, they were nearly always alone. Lumley's tastes were not at all of this kind, and he seemed happy to have one to take his *task* off his hands. It is strange that he did not perceive what a very dangerous arrangement this must be for all parties ; but I imagine that selfish people see nothing beyond the gratification of their own immediate convenience, and are blind, and, therefore, indifferent, to what may be the eventual consequence. For Mr. Blount, it is very possible that he might see the danger, but he turned his eyes from it.

as men are always apt to do from any disagreeable truth. The fact, if it must be spoken, was that, by this time, he had begun to feel his former (aye, more than his former) interest and delight in Mrs. Lumley's society; and, alas! how difficult it is to deny ourselves these things when they are thus offered to the taste.

But I will let him speak for himself: all description of feeling is, and must be, cold and imperfect, in comparison with that in the mouth of him whose feelings are described:—

“ Our intimacy, by degrees, became perfectly renewed. She was still, in her best moments, very much what she had ever been. It is true that her spirits were, at the first, nearly always forced; but then, as all who have been under the necessity of forcing their spirits well know, this leads, in a short time,

to a real flow, if not of true gaiety of heart, at least of real cheerfulness of manner; as those who excite themselves by wine, raise their vivacity by an artificial stimulant; but the vivacity so raised, is, for the time, real. But her dark hours were now more frequent and continued; the oppression of leaden and gnawing unhappiness weighed upon her, worse, far worse, than the most violent ague of spirit—for that must be short-lived in proportion to its violence. The one is like the bitterness of an inflicted death; the other is like the ‘merciless mercy’ of changing that death into perpetual imprisonment.

Thus did her soul seem sinking in the thralldom of enduring sorrow. The almost inexhaustible buoyancy of her nature, aided by the youth she still possessed, made her struggles to throw off this moral incubus frequent, and for the time effectual. It was

during such moments especially that she reminded me of her former self. One token of the uncontaminated goodness and amiability of her heart was, that, after all she had undergone, the turn and quality of her wit were in no degree made more acrid. This is, indeed, most rare; for scarcely ever do we find a person possessing strong powers of wit, who has undergone suffering,—still more, suffering which includes disgrace,—who is not soured and virulent, as it were, in revenge. But it was in no degree so with her. Her vivacity was at times even playful, though that playfulness would be immediately clouded and saddened by a shade passing over the brightness of her eyes,—by a sigh being checked just as it had become perceptible.

“ As, however, we grew more familiar and unreserved, her endeavours to assume

gaiety very visibly relaxed. She gradually made less and less exertion to conceal the real state of her mind ; and, though she never actually spoke of her sorrows, yet the tone of her conversation, and the complexion of her topics, became sadly assimilated to her situation. I thought too, as I closely watched her in Lumley's presence, that her fear of him, which was at all times apparent, was sometimes mingled with an expression as much of angry and even indignant reproachfulness, as it was with love. It is very certain that, with a proud woman, such conduct as I every day more and more plainly perceived his to be, will at last destroy even the warmest and fondest affection. Such constant wounds to the just self-appreciation of such a woman, will, in the end, dispel that illusion of love, which prevents these things being viewed in their

true light. There is no woman who can bear slight; still less is it to be borne by one of high qualities and gifts, who has incurred guilt and degradation for the sake of him who slights her.

“ One day, after I had been about a month at Spa, I was out with her on one of the rambles I have described. Lumley had been more than usually cold and careless in the excuse which he made for not accompanying us; and, as we parted from him, I saw a flash of mingled indignation and despair gleam for a moment in her dark bright eyes. When she set off, however, she seemed, by a sudden effort, to shake away the feelings which had been excited; and her conversation became more animated, rapid, and even eloquent, than I had almost ever before heard it. But it was also more evidently *unreal*. Her cheek became flushed

with what may be termed a lurid, rather than a brilliant, red ; and her eye was lighted up with an almost unnatural fire. Both her appearance and manner betokened that false and feverish state of mind, which seeks refuge from pain by a forced, forcible, and unremitting direction of its powers, to indifferent and extraneous subjects. By 'unremitting' I mean that hurried and unnatural passing from topic to topic, which you must have often witnessed in such circumstances, and which seems to be occasioned by a dread that the slightest, even a moment's, pause would at once throw back the mind under the control of that one feeling from which it is using such violent efforts to escape. But not the conversation only, but the whole bearing and demeanour of persons thus influenced, are abrupt, startling, and (I must repeat the word) unreal.

Then, after we had gone some way, whilst she was in the midst of a most animated conversation,—quite on a sudden, and without the slightest notice to me,—she struck off nearly at full speed, and continued, in despite of the difficulties of the ground, to ride at that pace till a very precipitous declivity obliged us at last to pull up.

“As we went down the hill, her saddle became loose, fastened, as it was, with the miserable tackle of the country; so, when we got to the bottom, I lifted her off her horse, that I might re-adjust it. The valley into which we had descended was one of the most beautiful of those spots of enclosed solitude of which I have endeavoured to give you some idea.* While, therefore, I was

* It will be seen that the earlier portion of this chapter, though given in the third person, was taken directly from Mr. Blount's Correspondence. Ed.

busied with her horse, she sat down on the green bank of the stream, which formed almost a natural throne; and, when all was ready for her again to mount, she said she was tired, and would rest there before she went on. I tied the horses to a tree, and sat down beside her.

“ I never saw her look so beautiful as she did at that moment. The excitement of her false spirits had passed away; but the flush of the cheek remained, as if to give brightness to a picture that would otherwise have been too gloomy and uncoloured. The eye, indeed, spoke the re-action which had taken place within; and an air of mingled pain and listlessness pervaded the whole of that speaking countenance. Her riding-hat was partially thrown back, and her dark hair (to which the exercise had given that half-curled flowingness, which is so much more

aceful than its appearance when accurately dressed) floated over the warm cheek, brought out in strong relief by that tint of rison beauty. As I seated myself by her e, I was, I own, sufficiently moved by se appearances. The *local'e* also was ll suited to give additional effect to such isations. The sun had begun to decline, that the whole of the narrow valley was shade. The day had been intensely hot; d the contrast of the coolness and repose this lovely and lonely spot sank delici- sly upon the senses, and through them ion the heart. It seemed, indeed, like a een palace of refreshment and of rest, shut it by the wooded hills from the hot and oush world without.

“ We sat for some time in silence—I was izing on her, and she was gazing on the ater, as it bubbled past her feet. But she

was conscious of my gaze. On a sudden, she said,—‘ Do you remember that evening when we stood together by the brook, in the grounds at M——?—But we were not alone *then*—Julia was with us.”—She fixed her eyes upon me as she spoke, and I believe that, long as I have given up blushing, I coloured a little; inasmuch as this was by no means the exact recollection which I wished to raise in her; but I answered that I remembered it perfectly.—‘ And do you remember our conversation also?’

“ ‘ Yes; I recollect likening you to the stream—springing and glancing in the bright sun, and giving life and freshness to the whole scene through which it passed.’

“ ‘ Ah,’ she added, ‘ and I completed the parallel. I said it was like me, because the rocks which struck and bruised its bosom were the very causes of its motion and glitter-

ing ;—I said it was like me, because, after being tended and adorned, and having every aid and adjunct bestowed upon it while it was of service or embellishment to the rich man's domain,—it was allowed to glide away amid thorns and difficulty, and darkness, the moment his end was answered. Alas!—little did I think at that moment how awfully my prophecy would be fulfilled!—I knew that a dark fate awaited me, but I could not expect *this*—I expected unhappiness, but not guilt—
I awaited sacrifice, but not shame—and now!——’ She stooped her head upon her hands, and the gushing tears sprang through the interstices of her fingers, the veins of which seemed darkened and swollen almost to bursting.

“ I paused during the first burst of agony ; and then took her hand, and spoke to her in the voice of consolation. ‘ Oh ! Mr.

Blount!’ she exclaimed, ‘how I have loved that man it were vain to speak; my actions, my actions have shewn it. I gave up for him my friends—I abandoned for him my home—I incurred for him guilt—I became for him ——’ her voice grew deeper and almost hollow as she spoke, ‘the object of scorn and burning shame—and how am I requited?’ She paused for a moment, and then continued—‘You cannot know, it is impossible for you to conceive, what I have suffered, what I suffer: fretfulness, and coldness, and indifference, and neglect. He seems, too, as if it were *he* who had made the sacrifice, not I—as if it were to *him* that it had cost every thing that can give life a value;—and once, ——here again her voice sank, and her frame shook, ‘and once, he almost upbraided me with being what I have become for him!’

“My heart bled within me to see this lovely

reature in her agony; it warmed towards her more than ever it had before done; it hurried me, by the circumstance of the moment, into more than my natural and real feeling. ‘And what,’ she continued, ‘what have I to look to?—a life like this is too, too dreadful; and I am not fit to die!’

“It is very easy, my dear Frewin, for moralists, seated quietly in their closets, to expatiate upon the guilt incurred by passion. In the coolness of their blood—in a position free from all tempting,—it may seem an easy thing to them to keep on the even tenour of their way—to walk without dread or chance of falling. But an occasion like that which I have been describing, when it happens in real life, is, I believe, almost more than the most stoical can come through blamelessly.

I will confess that the temptation was too strong for *me*,—and—I forget the words in


which I spoke—but I know that I had not spoken for two minutes before I found myself urging her to trust her happiness in my hands—to seek an asylum in my heart and home. I spoke, as I fancy most men do in such circumstances, rapidly, and with warmth ;—she listened without answering a word. At last, when I had ceased, she said,—‘ No ; that can never be now. Time was when we might have loved each other—but that, in despite of what you say, is passed for ever in both of us.’ I was going to interrupt her, but she went on,—‘ Yes, in both of us ; the bloom of her heart is gone—it is the force of circumstance which now misleads you—we never can love each other as both deserve to be loved—it can never be !’ I felt the truth of this to my very heart, and I remained silent. ‘ I am unhappy,’ she continued, ‘ I am most wretched—but I have chosen

lot, and I must endure it as best I may.—
 “Come,” said she, rising up, and collecting
 once, as it were, both mental and physical
 strength,—‘come—we have been here long
 enough, too long, perhaps—let us be going.’
 She helped her upon her horse, and we pro-
 ceeded homeward. We spoke but little, and
 that little was on quite indifferent matters.

“The next morning, I received from her
 note, which you will find enclosed: the
 consequence was that, the day after, I af-
 fected sudden business to call me away, and
 left Spa.* I had, I will confess to you,
 a very considerable struggle with myself
 before I could resolve on this step. If I had
 remained, there can be small doubt, after
 what had passed, that, in the end, I should
 have prevailed. But, alas! to what purpose
 would it have been? There is but *one* thing,

* This letter is dated from Lausanne. Ed.

which can in the very least palliate misconduct of this kind—it is the most entire and uncontrollable affection ; and this, as she most truly said, we never should have felt for each other. On my part, it was pity, and old remembrance, and the craving of a heart *usé*, (I will not say *usagé*,) which led it morbidly to such occupation and excitement ;—on hers, it was old remembrance also, and present despair, and the resentment arising from ill-requital ;—but on neither side was it, nor would it have become, enthralling and unmingled love. If the matter had been to be decided on the moment, and in her presence, I am far from thinking that I should have reasoned thus coolly and well—but she *wrote* instead of *speaking* to me—and I had time to pause and think. When once I had made my resolve, I acted. I wrote to her immediately—the tenour of



answer you can conceive. I anticipate, dear F., what you will say to me of my folly and imprudence; but, believe me, no one can be more thoroughly aware of them than I am. No one can regret more truly at my escape, both from great unhappiness on my own score, and from drawing additional misery (for so it mainly would have been) on the head of already so miserable.

When I went to take leave of them, and tell Lumley of my purposed departure, my wife was in her own room, and remained there till she knew my visit must be drawing towards a close. She then came down; and when L. said to her,—‘Only think, my friend Blount is going to leave Spa; persuade him to stay,’ she gave me a look of affectionate gratitude, which was more sweet to my heart than any triumph

could have been, had she been the companion of my journey. She played surprise very ill—which gratified me; for it confirmed me in my belief that, whatever her faults might be, no circumstance could ever have made her a hypocrite. She looked very pale, and was wholly without rouge; her hair was fastened straight back from the face without curl, which added to her *abbattue* appearance. She spoke very little, but she looked in a manner which again almost shook my resolution; for she seemed to be thinking that, when I was gone, she should have none left in the world who loved her. I wonder L. suspected nothing—for there was a consciousness in the manner of both of us, which could scarcely fail to be apparent. But he did not—or, if he did, he concealed his suspicion perfectly.

“ When I rose to go, I took her by the

hand, and said a few sentences of as much kindness as the presence of Lumley would permit. She answered me in the same way; but she pronounced the word *friend* in a tone which went to my soul. L. and I parted cordially enough, in appearance; but my heart smote me for my hypocrisy, in thus speaking fairly to a man against whom my indignation was so great;—but *ainsi va*—


“As I left the house, I looked up to her windows. She was there—she smiled to me as she kissed her hand; but tears swam in her eyes, and belied the expression. I turned the corner which shut her from my sight.—When shall we meet *next*?—

* * * * *

THE ENCLOSURE,

“I have determined to write to you, because I am sure *you* will not misconstrue my

so doing. After what has passed, it is better, far better, for all parties, that we should cease to meet. There is only one way to insure this; which is, that you should leave this place. It is to entreat this kindness of you that I write to you now. In what you said to me this morning, you were led away by the circumstances of the moment to say far more than you feel, or can feel. Indeed, you could not but become conscious of this, on a moment's reflection. No! I repeat now what I said to you at the time—we never can love each other as alone we would consent to be loved. You see the confidence I have in your honour and good feeling by writing thus; but, having that confidence, it would be a paltry affectation, from which, at least, I always have been free, not to speak with perfect frankness, and explicitly, as I speak at all. No!—I never can love



as alone you would be willing to be loved. My heart is spent, exhausted—it has vished all its feelings upon *one* object; and ough that love has been ill-requited in the me degree as it should have been the reverse, still the gift has been made—it has ft me with no more to give. When I laced my whole happiness, and hopes of appiness, in *his* hands, I well knew the step as irrevocable. I knew it was taken once nd for ever; and, although I little looked o its proving what it has proved, I feel as trongly as at first, that it was, is, and must e ‘once and for ever’ still. Neither could ou love *me*, as alone I would be loved. You ave loved too often—you have used your best affections too much and too frequently, ever again to feel a passion, such as at one time (you see I am indeed frank) might have existed between us. Recollect that, to-day,

I remembered Julia, though you had forgotten her. You deceived yourself for a moment—by this time, I am sure, you feel it was only for a moment.

“ But friendship—strong, real, delicate friendship—I am confident you do feel for me ; and I am confident, also, that you will acknowledge that it can best be shewn by acting as I now request you. If I had a lower opinion of you than I have, I should not write thus, lest you should construe the request that you should go, into a disguised wish that you should stay. But I know your nature ; and I know that it is above either feeling or imputing a littleness. I feel that I can speak to you frankly and from the heart, without the shackles of those conventional half-falsities which usually clog and degrade the communication between your sex and mine. Let me hear from you one line,

communicate your determination ; I have no fear as to *what* it will be.

“ And now, God bless you !—it has given me more pain than probably I ought to confess to you, to determine as I have done ; for I feel that I am sending from me one who, deplorable as I now am, has feelings of truer kindness towards me than any I have known for a long time. We shall probably never meet again ; but, believe me, I shall always remember that I have had in you a friend, who has ever, in good report and ill report, done me more than justice ; and has now felt with the tenderness of a feeling heart, and the warmth of a friendly one, for the unhappiness of the lost, wronged, heart-broken creature, who now bids him farewell for ever.—Once more, God bless you !

“ Tuesday Evening.”

CHAPTER VI.

“The faltering speech—the look estranged—
Voice, step, and life, and beauty changed.”

MOORE.

WHETHER or not Mr. Blount was correct in his belief that, ‘if he had remained, he should have finally prevailed’—I leave it to my readers individually to judge. It is certain that, by making the request that he should go, Mrs. Lumley betrayed a conscious fear of his power if he stayed; or, as a friend of mine, who saw the original letters, observed, “By saying she never can love again, she proves she half can.” But my purpose in giving at length this portion of the

correspondence, was to shew the effect of first blunting the delicacy of the moral feeling in the female mind. It is evident that Blanch was here in danger of a *second* fall; a crime so repugnant to our ideas of moral earnestness, that scarcely any fictitious writer has ever ventured upon its delineation;* and even this distant approach to which I could have forbore, if I had been composing an imaginary story. It is true that, by her own strength of mind, and by the good feeling of the other party, she did not draw very near to the precipice; but neither was her escape so triumphant as to place her above the reproach of having been in danger. Truly, indeed, did she describe herself to be desolate and heart-broken! Her first mar-

* I must except M. Benjamin Constant's novel of *Adolphe*, a work in which a singularly intimate knowledge of the female heart is embodied with great power of language and of illustration.



riage was unhappy from its being forced, uncongenial, and ill-sorted : her second was unhappier still, from the sense of guilt being added to that of misery. In this instance, she had chosen for herself; she had broken through every tie, and sacrificed every advantage, to obtain the object of that choice : *here* she had no one to reproach but herself, save only him, to condemn whom was to her the severest of condemnations.

It is not my purpose to dwell upon Mr. Lumley's conduct towards her. It is too revolting to contemplate ingratitude and ill-requital to such degree, and of such a nature. Still this is, I believe, far from a singular case. There are, if rumour on these subjects may be believed, existing instances of ill-requital as severe, where the sacrifices have been even greater. There is no need to confine ourselves to the parties before us

strong and appalling confirmation of the
 1, that 'the crime carries the punish-
 t along with it.'

or about a year after Mr. Blount left
 in the manner I have shewn, the Lum-
 continued to travel on the Continent--
 : dissensions becoming daily more painful.
 moroseness and harshness increased, and
 health sank in proportion. It is not to
 supposed, indeed, that a creature so sen-
 ve as she was, could long endure so con-
 ned a conflict of the feelings, without very
 terially and visibly suffering in bodily
 lth. And did not this touch his heart?
 d not the decay of that lovely being, who
 d sacrificed all for his love, strike him with
 norse for his unkindness, and change his
 meanour towards her? Alas! I am com-
 lled to answer, No. As the low spirits,
 d perhaps the irritability, of illness became

stronger in Blanch, he who had been the sole cause of all—illness, and depression, and querulous temper,—he shrank from enduring the effects of his own actions;—the effects in her aggravated and reproduced their own causes in him. And, as her beauty waned, that beauty which had first attracted him, and of which he had afterwards been so proud, he seemed almost to consider its decrease as a subject of blame to her,—as if it were the effect of her own will, exerted to give him displeasure. And such is man! or, to speak more justly—there are some men such!

I proceed with real reluctance and pain to state the result. Blanch was, at length, directed by her physicians to pass the winter at Nice,—her health, in fact, being too precarious to pass it elsewhere. Will it be believed that, two days after their arrival there, Mr. Lumley left her to come to London, on

ea of urgent business? Business!—what
 ness could be so urgent a duty,—what
 ness could be so sacred,—what business
 ht to have been so readily undertaken,—
 hat of tending, cherishing, and succour-
 the sickness of her whose whole life, now
 se life itself, had been sacrificed to him?
 Mr. Lumley's adieux were made slightly
 hastily. If he had any touch of feeling
 his moment, it shewed itself only in his
 iding its being too strongly called into
 y. With her, the case was far different.
 e leaned from the window as he got into
 carriage and drove rapidly away; and,
 en she had seen him turn from her sight,
 e threw herself back upon a couch, and
 pt unrestrainedly. She felt that she was
 w *alone in the world*. That sensation of
 olation, which, even when slight and tem-
 rary, is the most painful and depressing

thing in the world, now struck upon her heart in all its weight and coldness. Her late treatment sank, for the time, from before her view; and she thought only of the man who alone had possessed her love—who had called into action, in their fullest extent, those strong capabilities of loving, which had been hidden and made dormant by her former marriage. She had lavished on him all the affections of a warm heart—all the energies and admiration of a lofty and powerful mind. Her attachment to him had been the destiny of her life;—he was gone from her, she felt, for ever. She was alone in the world!

Pride, womanly pride, that strong support under similar circumstances, and which had once existed to so great a degree in Blanch, had now no power. It was chilled and weakened by illness and long-suffering,—it sank

th the feeling of loneliness, as well as
ertion, so icy, so paralyzing. Her heart
o longer strength to be proud ;—it had
d with her bodily health, and was as
out as that.

r health was indeed fast sinking. The
vas fallen, the eye was hollow, the form
ken. The slow fever of grief had preyed
her frame, and reduced it to its former
w. Who now would have known the
it, animated creature, who answered to
ame of Blanch Delvyn? Who would
recognized in the pale, wasted, pre-
arely-aged woman, the brilliant Lady
tore ; who, in the whirl of society, had
avoured to lose sight of her repulsive
e—who was the ‘observed of all ob-
rers,’—the Queen, for a time, of the tran-
ry kingdom of London Fashion? Who,
n, could have traced, in what she was

now, the mature and lovely woman, who, made still more beautiful by accomplished love, had appeared on the Continent with Lumley, as his newly wedded bride? Alas! she was totally changed from all these. Their beauty had faded under the finger of disease,—the brilliant and animated wit of the two first, as well as the fine overflowing fondness of the other, had become withered under care and anxious suffering—they existed no more. Left by all, even by him for whom *she* had left all, she was now tottering to the grave without a companion to cheer her—without a friend to listen to her sufferings, to smooth for her the pillow of death.

The shock which she had sustained by Lumley's departure, though it had been anticipated, and though she had prepared herself for it, affected her severely. And, thus additionally weakened, she had to undergo,

other—not, indeed, equally trying to the
 elings, and of a totally different kind; but
 all which, situated as she was, was distress-
 ing to her to a strong degree.

She was one day walking on one of these
 races looking to the South, which forms
 a distinctive character of the place, open-
 ing its bosom, sheltered on all the colder
 sides, to the soft Mediterranean, and its
 warm sun and gentle breezes. The blue
 sky contrasts agreeably with the white houses
 and olivetrees of dusky green which stud its
 shore; and the whole scene is lighted up by
 that gladsome and genial southern sun, which
 vivifies the sinking invalid, and retains the
 vital warmth (almost beyond its time) in the
 frame, chilled by the icy grasp of disease
 and death. One day, after Mr. Lumley had
 been gone some little time, Blanch was seen
 sitting upon a bench of one of these walks.

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 e some little time, Blanch was seat-
 a bench of one of these walks,

now, the mature and lovely woman, made still more beautiful by accomplished love, had appeared on the Cobbin with Lumley, as his newly wedded bride. Alas! she was totally changed from all that. Their beauty had faded under the finger disease,—the brilliant and animated wit, the two first, as well as the fine overflowing fondness of the other, had become withered under care and anxious suffering—they existed no more. Left by all, even by him for whom *she* had left all, she was now tottering to the grave without a companion to cheer her—without a friend to listen to her sufferings, to smooth for her the pillow of death.

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THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN THE YEAR 1841

AND 1842

BY

JOHN RUSSELL

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

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OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

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 en gone some little time, Blanch was seat-
 upon a bench of one of these walks,

gazing upon the fair scene before her, and taking, as it were, her last last looks, at Nature, when a gentleman and a lady, came and seated themselves upon the same bench, leaving but small space between them and her. For a little time, the two parties did not take any notice of each other. Blanch continued gazing upon the sea, and had scarcely remarked the coming of her companions. They had merely given a cursory glance to her as they sat down, and for a time they chanced to continue silent. At length the gentleman made some observation, to his companion. The voice thrilled through Blanch's frame, to her very marrow. She started and turned round—it was Lord Montore who was seated by her side! Wrapped in cloaks, and shawls, and veils, she had not been recognized by him, to say nothing of her appearance, and of

she had taken no notice, till his well-known voice had roused her. She rose instantly, and strove to walk onward, but the pulsion had been too strong—a half-scream, a groan, struggled for a moment in her throat, she sank backwards, and would have fallen to the ground if Lord Montore (who did not recognize her, but had been attracted by her exclamation) had not caught her in his arms! He lifted her veil to give her air—and then, pale and changed, and bowed with grief and suffering, he beheld, the first time since she had left him, the beautiful features of his wife.

I will not attempt to depict what his feelings might be at that moment; I have, indeed, no accurate means of judging; but one with a human heart in his bosom must have been moved at seeing one whom he had once loved, *thus*. Lord M. had mar-

ried a second time, and his present wife was the lady now with him. She did not at all know how to account for her lord's very evident, and very unusual agitation; but before she had time to satisfy her curiosity, or he to recover from his surprise, Blanch, who had fainted from weakness only, began to come to herself, and she found herself in Lord Montore's arms.

The situation was equally embarrassing for both of them; common humanity would not allow him to leave her thus, and he scarcely knew how to address her. Fortunately, at that moment, Blanch's servant approached with her carriage. She had only got out to walk for a short time, and it now drew near. With a few expressions, therefore, of thanks on one side, and of hopes of speedy restoration on the other, they parted. Neither said any thing to shew that the other

recognized; but both knew that they
h were so.

This incident made upon Blanch a strong-
effect than the temporary indisposition
ch it occasioned. Lord Montore, she
conscious, must have seen her changed
e; did he, could he, attribute it to its
cause?—This was the thought which
nted her and preyed upon her. Some-
es she thought that he would ascribe
altered appearance to illness alone; but,
a, he would know that Mr. Lumley was
n her no longer; and that would lead
to the just conclusion. She felt like
brave Douglas in the ballad, who la-
nts, not for death, but that his succumb-
should have been witnessed by his ene-
—“Earl Percy sees my fall!” was the
thing which was uppermost and last in
mind. “He will see that I am left in

my turn," thought Blanch, "and that I suffer from it more than he did. If he knew all, he would see, that he is indeed awfully avenged!"

Blanch's health continued to decline. Her health preyed upon her spirits, and her spirits upon her health again. She heard from Lamley briefly, coldly, and at long intervals: and he never spoke of return. She became weaker and weaker; and at length could not leave the house. What does it avail to pause upon my story, and to shrink from coming to its end? Her strength wasted by regular and rapid degrees. With the exception of her servants, she had no one to tend her illness; with the exception of her servants, she had no one to witness and to soothe her death!

foreign hands her dying eyes were closed,
foreign hands her decent limbs composed !”

such was the end of Blanch Delvyn !

but part of the lesson remains to be read ;
I shall add her last letter to Mr. Lumley,
I shall add no more. Such things need
comment.

— Before this reaches you, I shall
have ceased to be. My physicians, and my
sensations alike tell me that I have not
many days to live. A crowd of things rush
on my mind that I would wish to say to
you at this moment; and yet I cannot
say them; perhaps for their very number.
The feelings of the last years of my life
涌 upon me together, and are mixed in
undistinguishable and most oppressive
mass. Oh ! that you were here, that I might

speaking; for I am too weak to arrange my ideas consecutively, or even to put them upon paper when I have done so.

“ I will not upbraid you. You must have feelings of self-reproach which I would strive rather to lighten than to add to. My life was doomed to be unhappy—I was wretched when first I knew you; must I say that I am more wretched, now? Oh, Lumley, you have cost me many a pang that I have pent up within my heart—many that you must have seen, and ought to have pitied!—But I have said that I would not reproach you, and I will not.

“ And yet, it is dreadful to die in this way! no friend near to comfort or console me; no counsellor to guide me, and I need guidance so much!—I pray, and for the time it calms me—but I would willingly not have had to pray alone.

"Seek out Margaret for me; and see her; tell her how I longed for her to have been with me at this time; tell her that her friendship has been the chief blessing of my life; and that I cling to it now at the last; give her one of my rings, the emerald one, she gave it me, when we were both children, and I have worn it ever since. Let her wear it now."

"And now, Lumley, I am to bid you farewell; I have written till I can scarce see the paper before me; *I cannot, I cannot, say farewell for ever!* Believe me, believe me, that, spite of all, my last word is, my last thought will be—God Almighty bless you!"

END OF THE STORY OF BLANCH DELVYN.

EXTRACT VII.

he Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!

now recommence my extracts from Mr.
Blount's MSS.—ED.]

Mayence, September, 1790.*

THIS Rhine is a magnificent thing certainly! Notwithstanding all I had heard concerning it lately, it has, out and out, surpassed my expectations. I certainly was ever so much struck and moved by mere scenery; but then I never before saw *such*

* Mr. Blount was, at this time, on his journey from France into Switzerland, after the occurrences detailed in the letters inserted in the Story of Blanch Delvyn. As the reader has already been made acquainted with her fortunes, I have purposely omitted any passages in this portion of Mr. B.'s correspondence, &c. which may relate to her.—ED.

scenery. Some mountain scenery may be grander, some river views more rich and *various*; but where else shall we find united the busy throng of cities and commerce, the highest state of fertility, wildness amounting to desolation, and grandeur soaring to sublimity?


The 'Valley of the Rhine,' through which I have just passed, stretches from Bonn to Bingen, a distance of about eighty miles. The majestic and incomparable river accompanies you the whole way, while its banks present every possible variety of interest and beauty. In some places, the valley is narrow, with the hills rising like cliffs, from the water's edge, rocky and bare; but still with the vine cultivated in every cleft and crevice which has earth sufficient to give it root. In others, the banks are more decidedly wooded, and, here and there, they retreat some little

into a fertile and highly cultivated
y. Villages and towns innumerable are
d along the shore; and every now and
the ruins of a fine old castle, perched on
almost inaccessible rock, crowns the
e.

went over the ruins of one of these
g-holds, which form a crown to the
d mount of Gödesberg. They command
xtensive and most striking view, espe-
y to the Northward; and the remains of
castle are, in themselves, curious and ex-
dinary. I ascended to the top by a
ow stair, formed in the thickness of the
, which five men could, in case of need,
made good against a hundred. In-
, the whole way along the Rhine, I have
struck with the strong and almost inac-
ble positions of these old "burghs." It
ery picturesque certainly, and romantic

also, to see a strong-hold placed on the top of a peak, where almost "the birds would fear to build;" but it gives a lamentable idea of the state of society, when such precautions were necessary. One cannot but feel no slight degree of pity for the unfortunate peasant, who was obliged to submit to the tyranny of one of the barons, Chatelains of these castles, to save himself from having his throat cut by another.

Nearly opposite Gödesberg is the Drachenfels, the most remarkable of "the Seven Mountains." It rises at once and abruptly from the Rhine, clothed beneath with vines, and towering, at the top, in bare and perpendicular crags. The ruins of a tower crown the whole; and so grandly do they soar into the sky, that I distinguished, at above two leagues on the other side, Cologne. Nothing can be more noble and beautiful



the view from hence. Downwards, the
traces the windings of the river as far
as Cologne; and, to the South, 'the
bay of the Rhine' begins to spread with
its beauties. Close beneath, in the mid-
dle of the stream, lies Rolandswerder; with
Rolandseck hanging above it, on the left
bank of the river.

This is one of the numberless spots along
the Rhine to which belongs an old and ro-
mantic legend. On the Rolandswerder (Ro-
land's Isle) is a nunnery, in which the ladye-
love of Roland took the veil, in consequence
of a false report of his death; and the Ro-
landseck is a hermitage, now quite in ruins,
said to have been built by him on his return,
that he might overlook the convent of his
love, and endeavour to single her out
from among her fellows, and to distinguish
her voice in the chaunting of the service.

The story ends with her death from a broken heart, and his in consequence.

Nearly all the names of places along the Rhine have, as well as these, some meaning descriptive or traditional. The sonorous and expressive German combines two or three words into a beautiful name, in a way which, in our language, would be uncouth and ridiculous. Almost every one of these castles and crags have some traditional legend. In this mineral district, "the swart spirit of the Mine" is a frequent and very diverting agent. He seems to be of that class of spirits to which Robin Goodfellow belongs, playing all manner of knavish pranks, but without real malice, or serious evil; and, now and then, doing a good turn in his own fanciful and wayward manner.

I was most particularly struck, however, with the legend attached to the rock called

the Lurley'—perhaps, from the peculiar
ity of the spot; as also from the faculty
cho which the rock is said still to possess.
a little above St. Goar, where the river
comes still more rapid, and its banks more
l and magnificent than usual. There
e no horses at the post-house when I ar-
d there, so I walked forward along the
r side. Just above the town, is one of
most striking points in its whole course.
ween two abrupt turns, the Rhine as-
ues the appearance of a mountain lake,
a the exception of its rapid and violent
am, which dashes against the rocks at the
er extremity of the reach. The cliff
ch forms the southern point is the rock
the Lurley, which is said to echo fifteen-
l. I conclude, if this be true at all, it
st be from the middle of the stream; for,
my great disappointment, I could make it

answer me no more than once, from the bank. This once, however, was clear, distinct, and beautifully toned. I was not the less disappointed from having composed, as I walked along, the first of the following stanzas, in anticipation of the effect of the echo. It was somewhat ludicrous to be thus balked; but, instead of altering or abandoning my stanza, I sat down and scribbled two more to the tail of it. The boatmen say that the rock is the abode of an *Ondine*, who, like the syrens of old, with her beauty and her song, lures the unwary to destruction:—

WRITTEN OPPOSITE THE LURLEY.

I.

How strange and wild these sounds are! oh, 'tis
sweet

To breathe the name of one beloved, and hear
This countless Echo's magic voice repeat,

Bounding from rock to rock, a note so dear!

one to hear it, too—lest it should meet,
 So loved and sacred, an indiff'rent ear!
 We would not have this cherish'd, heart-nurs'd
 tone
 received by any ear, except one's own!

II.

Now soothing 'tis to sit upon the brink
 Of this majestic river, and, among
 these mighty crags, deliciously to drink
 These our own echoes, as they float along,
 The answering rock!—well might the fisher think
 Such sounds to be the water-spirit's song,
 And fable a fair creature to give breath
 To tones so sweet they even lured to Death!

III.

Ah! I could linger long hours in this place
 Of manifold enchantments!—the soft light,
 Form'd by the meeting cliffs—around their base
 The splendid stream—the tow'r which to the
 sight

Seems hung upon the mountain's beetling face—

—Oh! who can view such scene without de-
light?

'Tis one which rivets the retreating eye,
And which the full heart parts from with a sigh!

I was just scratching down the last couplet, in all the agonies of an uncut pencil, when the carriage overtook me, and I was quickly whirled from this truly beautiful and interesting spot. The legend, however, relating to the *Ondine** appeared to me so wild and romantic, and so peculiarly fitted to the scene in which it is laid, where the stream is dangerously rapid, and the overhanging cliffs are thus, as it were, almost vocal, that I have since been making enquiries of every body,

* The same superstition has, in our days, furnished the groundwork of the very beautiful and popular Fairy Tale of the Baron de la Motte Fouqué, published under the title of '*Ondine*.'—ED.

ntle and simple, concerning its details. I
ve picked up one bit from one, and one
m another, which I have blended together
the legend of

THE NYMPH OF THE LURLEY.

In days of yore, there was occasionally to
seen, upon the Lurley, at sunset, in the
ilight, and by moonlight, a maiden singing.
er beauty was of the most graceful and vo-
ptuous kind, and her voice was the sweet-
sound which had ever floated over the wa-
s of the Rhine. Perhaps, both the scene
d the hour entered for something into the
treme effects produced by her song. The
urley is situated in the most beautiful part
the most beautiful of rivers. The rocks
se in upon the stream, and overhang it on
ch side, and hence render it more rapid and
multuous. The hour when she appeared

was always in the calm of the summer evening, or the still deeper calm of the summer night, when the moon sheds her radiance of beauty and of peace upon the gliding river, and makes its waves appear as though they were formed of living light. At such times as these, the maid would be seen upon the rock, her long golden hair floating upon the evening breeze, or fantastically braided and twined with river-flowers. And, then, she would breathe forth sounds of such exquisite melody—of such unmatched sweetness, and softness, and strength,—that the boatmen who were descending the Rhine, would become so enthralled in delight as totally to forget their boat—themselves—every thing but the music, which thus engrossed and charmed them. Hence would their boats, floating with the stream, no longer guided by their oar, become entangled among the

currents and eddies which abound about this spot, and be dashed to pieces against the rocks.

At length, so many lives were lost, through the irresistible fascinations of this syren's song, that the people in the country round began, in the simple creed of those early times, to think that she was endued with magical power; and that she exerted it to the destruction of the human race. From time to time, however, she was known to do kindnesses to the boatmen on the Rhine. She could sometimes direct the young fishermen who frequented the spot, where to cast their nets; and when they followed her directions, they were certain to make an immense draught. These fishers, who were the only persons who had ever seen the nymph closely, talked in raptures of her beauty, of her sweet voice, of her kind manner, of the real bene-

fits which she conferred upon them. Thus it happened that, what with blame, and what with praise, the Nymph of the Lurley became the chief subject of which all persons spoke for many leagues around.

At length her fame reached the court of the Count Palatine, and shortly was the sole topic of discussion throughout its precincts. In bower and in hall, by knight and by lady, by baron and by squire, the Nymph of the Lurley was equally the subject of discourse. It was observed, however, that the matter was more favourite with the male than with the female courtiers. One young knight repeated what had been told to him concerning her beauty; another related the magical effects of her voice. The ladies, on the other hand, affected to disbelieve the more prominent points of these stories, and threw on them all, as much as

they could, the coldness of doubt, and
sneers, and utter disbelief.

At last, however, the son of the Count
took up the cause of the Nymph of the Lur-
ley,—and it is astonishing how rapidly a
change was operated in the opinions of the
ladies of the court concerning her. It is
even said that some of the foremost among
them introduced the fashion of dressing their
hair with water-lilies, brought from the
Rhine; which was reported to be a favour-
able costume with the beautiful nymph. But
if this there is, I think, not sufficient evi-
dence.

It was not long before the young Count
expressed his determination to make a jour-
ney to the Lurley, for the purpose of see-
ing its charming occupant. Many persons,
however, adopted the darker theory concern-
ing this mysterious being, and tried to dis-

suade the young Count from so perilous an adventure—representing her as a witch, who put on a beautiful semblance, and breathed sweet music, only to lure to their destruction all who came within the influence of her charms. But the Count was in the full flush of youth;—and when was youth ever restrained by prudence, when beauty was in the case?

He set off, therefore, on his journey, accompanied by a brilliant suite of youthful knights, who burned to go upon so romantic an expedition. The Count made no secret of his intention of bringing the nymph away from the place which had been the scene of so many fatal mischiefs, and then judge impartially of the various stories in circulation respecting her. He embarked, therefore, upon the Rhine, in a splendidly ornamented bark,—shining with gold, and

reaming with his own banner, and the gay
banners of his various followers.

The sun had just set when they came
within sight of the Lurley. A fine tint of
deep rose-colour still glowed in the western
sky ; while in the east, the cold, clear, blue
of night gave distinctly to view the bright
stars which shone amongst it. The boats
glided rapidly with the stream,—the current
of which was already become quicker in pro-
portion as they approached the Lake of St.
Goar. On the rock of the Lurley the nymph
was seated, singing ; — her long hair was
streaming upon the wind, and she held in
her hands a girdle of river-coral. As they
drew near, they began to distinguish the
words of her song :—

Come, oh ! come

To my wat'ry home—

The white shroud of lilies waits for thee !

The glistening wave
Is the mortal's grave—
But oh ! 'tis a sweet, sweet home to me !
I float in the cool
And deep, dark pool ;
They sink to the sand of the river bed—
And their dying wail
Is lost in the gale,
Which ripples the river above their head !

II.

The King of the Waters
Hath many daughters,
Some for the lake, and some for the sea ;—
But, oh ! it is mine
To watch o'er the Rhine—
The Rhine, in itself, is an ocean to me !
Its waves are as bright,
When in clear moonlight
They break, while the current onward rushes ;
And the vines hang o'er
The craggy shore,
And adorn its face with their brilliant blushes !

III.

Oh! Father! hear me!

The barks draw near me

To take me off to the dry, dry shore!

Where the waters flow not—

And the lilies glow not—

And the bubbling spring is heard no more!

Let thy car arise—

Let these mortals' eyes

See and shrink from thy matchless power—

Rhine, rise around me!

Let thy waters bound me

From these vain sons of a mortal hour!

It may be supposed that such a song as this would not be particularly prepossessing to the ears for which it was intended; but if any one formed such a supposition, he would be exceedingly mistaken. As in some more modern instances, the sound was so exquisite that the sense was wholly unheeded. The Count and his companions were entranced;

they scarcely breathed, lest the slightest particle of sound should be lost to them. The rowers, even, though composed of old boatmen, who regarded the nymph as an evil-doing witch, paused upon their stroke, and remained with uplifted oars, wholly enthralled by such sweet music. Nay, it is said that one of the oldest of them, who had been deaf for years, regained his hearing on this occasion:—but this needs confirmation.

The boats floated towards the rock, drifting with the current. The boatmen utterly neglected to attend to their charge. At length, of a sudden, when the nymph began the last of the above stanzas, and invoked the King of the Waters to shew his might, the persons on board the boats were, in some degree, roused from their torpor, by the violent heaving and swelling of the river, which began to rise on all sides, as though under the impulse of a vast but invisible

convulsion. There was no wind. The banners drooped along their staves, and the calm was unobscured by a single cloud. But the Rhine shewed every mark of a violent storm, which reigned in the waters, though in no degree extended to the air. The waves rose in tumultuous agitation—rushing and foaming as though the winds of Equinox swept over them. “It is the work of that ill-born witch!” exclaimed one of the attendants; and he levelled his cross-bow at her as he spoke. The Count called to him to stay his hand, but he was too late. The man let fly his bolt; but a huge wave reared its crest before it, and the arrow fell harmless to the water. The river rose more and more rapidly,—and at last, three enormous waves, which reached the part of the Lurley where the nymph was sitting, assumed the appearance of a glittering car, drawn by two foaming horses; though some of the spectators

thought that this appearance was only the addition of fancy to a casual formation. Be this as it may, into the largest of the three waves the nymph threw herself, and as she disappeared from the astonished sight of the Count and his party, they heard her exquisite voice breathing the following words :—

IV.

I go, I go
To my home below—
'Tis sweet and fair with the river-flowers :
Coral and amber
Bedeck my chamber,
And gems shine bright in my liquid bowers.
Go, Prince, in peace,
The storm shall cease ;
A kind heart beats within thy breast ;
But yea churlish groom
Shall meet his doom ;
In the wave, to-night, shall he take his rest !

v.

The river shall glide,
To the distant tide,
And shine as it hath always shone ;
But I no more
Shall behold this shore,
I go, and am for ever gone !
But a spot so dear
Still will keep me near—
My spirit will float in this river-lake ;
And strangers will come
To my Lurley-home
Ages hence, for that spirit's sake !

There was now no longer doubt of the nature of this fascinating being. She was an *undine*, or Water-spirit. Over these the human race have no power.

Her parting prophecy was fulfilled in every particular. The only person who suffered from this expedition, was the man

who levelled his cross-bow at her. His foot slipped as he was stepping on shore, and the wave, having once closed over him, did not loose its hold again.

The Ondine has never since been seen on the Lurley; nor has her song been heard there. But the fishermen say, that she still amuses herself by imitating and repeating their voices; and, to hear these remarkable sounds, strangers still flock to the abode of 'the Nymph of the Lurley.'

And now my romantic and poetical vein are both exhausted; for my fire has burned low, and my bottle of Hockheimer is out, and I can do nothing without these 'creature-comforts.' My fingers, too, are tired, and my eyes are heavy; so, to cure both ailments, I shall lay down my pen and go to bed.

EXTRACT VIII.

———— Beautiful !
How beautiful is all this visible world !
———— Hark ! the note,
The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd ;
My soul would drink those echoes.”

MANFRED.

[From the Diary.]

Vevay, July, 1791.

I AM no admirer of Rousseau ; but this is
at all—I am a sad heretic even about his
works. For the man himself, he has taken
great pains to render himself odious to every
person of delicacy or good feeling. He has
tinted himself as every thing that is mean,

heartless, and disgusting; and we are bound to believe his own representation. But, leaving him, as Jean Jacques, entirely out of the question, I cannot be brought to consider Julie and St. Preux, as the model and perfection of lovers. I cannot regard the letters given to them, at all as such letters as would be written under the circumstances described; they appear to me to be overwrought and overstrained, and they consequently lose that penetrating touch of real nature which strikes home at once to the heart. I have attempted to read the *Héloïse* again—here on its own ground—with the rocks of Meillerie rising before my eyes opposite, and the name of every village and hill around recalling some of its localities: but, I confess, I have not been able to finish it, even here. I believe there must be some peculiar defect in my mental vision with reference to this

ok; for that which stirs so much the arts of others, appears to me to be out of nature, and consequently falls blunted upon mine. Hence, the Héloïse is to me *wearisome*. When I come to a letter purporting to be written by the tenderest and most ardent of lovers, at the very crisis of his fortunes with his mistress, discussing to her the comparative merits of French and Italian music, what can I do but put down the book in despair and in disgust? I have had deeper and stronger emotions called into life by one day's ramble among these stupendous Alps, than by all the romantic associations of this "*petite ville*" at their feet. In the one case Nature spoke; in the other, a profligate and corrupted man.

During the months I have passed in Switzerland, I have walked over nearly every part of it. The grandeur and solitude of

mountain scenery have so much effect upon me, that, of late years, I have not always cared to meet and analyze the sensations which they excite. They were too solemn, too stirring—too painful, in short. If there be any thing which can impress the heart of an unreflecting or a worldly man with awe, it is witnessing the sublime and awful strength and solitude of Nature. If there be any time at which he will look into his own heart, and probe and search it, it is when he stands alone amidst such scenes. Nature appears herself before him, and points silently to her God and his !

How weak, how poor, do the evil passions by which he has been swayed appear to him then ! He wonders that motives, which now ~~seem~~ so slight, so unworthy, could ever have ~~had~~ the power of impelling him to action. ~~And~~ how differently does he view the conse-

ences of such actions; now, alone amidst mountains, and the concomitants of mountains—pine woods and awful precipices, and eternal snow—from what he did in the bustle of the world, and among the influences of worldly society! Those things on which he put his eyes, now rise before him with reachful intensity; those palliations which he dwelt upon, and viewed with microscopic exaggeration, are now dwindled to their real minuteness; the “small, still voice” within, which is drowned in the din of the world, is heard clearly and awfully in the midst of the mountain silence.

I have felt all this much, during the last months. Do as he will, a man cannot always run away from himself; his conscience will catch him at last,—and the longer it has been forcibly silenced, the louder and the more everely will it then speak. I have thought

more, in the way of retrospect and self-examination, during the last half-year, than in all the rest of my life put together. And am I satisfied with the result? Alas! alas! what a fearful question is that? What answer must I make to it? Must I say, that it presents me with time lost, powers wasted, heart made cold;—with those qualities which were given to cause happiness, having worked misery, —with the stream of life having been turned into the waters of bitterness?—If I speak the truth, I fear I must. As I have stood amidst the mountains of Savoy or of Berne, and gazed upon the delicate, and, perhaps, saddening beauties of the close of day, thus has my heart communed with itself—and the sighs which spring from the very soul have been groaned from my lips; and the passionate bursts of hysteric tears, which bespeak the spirit in its agony, have flowed from my

yes. The visions of my youth have risen before me;—those whom I have loved have recurred to my mind with a feeling of deep and solemn tenderness, how different, and oh! how superior, to the throes of more tumultuous passion which they excited long ago!


I have thought at such moments that, but for fortuitous events, I never should have chosen the course which I have followed through life. I have felt as though my soul were formed to cherish the domestic affections, and to place its whole hope of happiness on their cultivation and enjoyment—affections which, in the full tide of the world and of youth, I have been accustomed to think so cold, and treat so lightly. *This*, at least, I shall not do again. No! I feel that there is something deeper, tenderer, and finer, than the ebullitions of passion, and

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time, and have turned to address the companion who used to sit by my side; over the Loire—but the place is vacant now! Yes! the remembrance of that moonlight scene is graven on my heart in deeper characters than I had thought—it is ineffaceable! There was something so peculiar in the nature of our intercourse, that it never was, nor is it now, measured by its real duration as to time. The feelings of years may, by the force of circumstances, be crowded into the space of a few weeks; and they gain greater power from their very condensation. In all my more tender and thoughtful moods, when the best feelings of my nature are in activity, and the evil ones are at rest, Antonia rises before my mind, and my thoughts dwell upon her dear remembrance. The tumults of worldly pursuits obscure, for a time, this image. But they are only like vapour upon



mirror—they are speedily dissipated, and the true object appears again.

But it is vain to think thus now, still more vain to express such thoughts. I have forfeited the happiness which I might both have given and enjoyed—and I have lost it for ever!

And yet, if I cannot keep this recollection from my mind now, what shall I do when the Alps are no longer between us, and when I tread the soil of that country which she loved and praised so much? I remember, some years ago, I used to doubt what, when I visited Italy, would be the preponderating aim of my thoughts—whether classic, or of the middle ages? I used to fear that in the multitude of associations arising from these various kinds of glory, I should not know where to chuse:—but both these objects are now thrown into shade by a third. It is not

as the country of the Cæsars or the Medici, of Virgil or of Tasso, of the Capitol or of St. Peter's, that Italy will now find interest in my eyes. It is the native land of the woman I have loved; and one spark of passion eclipses, at once, all which the light of imagination or of learning can supply. I shall be in the same country, perhaps in the same city, with her; I shall be beneath that sky of which her remembrances used to be so keen, and her praises so fervent:—and yet I shall not see her. If the grave had closed between us, our separation could not be more complete!

At last, then, I am about to enter Italy! —What a crowd of feelings of all kinds rises upon me with that word! I have always looked thither with such interest and high curiosity; and, of late years, my personal feelings with respect to it have been so

strong, that it will be with no common sensations that I shall descend the Alps into its bosom. It is a land which might occupy a lifetime duly to explore: but I am a swallow-like traveller; like it, I skim over the surfaces of things, and I migrate almost as often. But Italy will demand a double degree both of me and observation. To such a country I shall not grudge it. And yet, though I have been drawing towards it for nearly the last twenty years, I feel almost surprised at being now about to cross its threshold. So true is it, that a hope is always agitating on the eve of its fulfilment!

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MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

BEING

SELECTIONS FROM THE PAPERS

OF

A MAN OF THE WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF GILBERT EARLE.

I waive the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing—
But, och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CHARLES KNIGHT,
PALL-MALL EAST.

1826.

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MR. BLOUNT'S MSS.

EXTRACT IX.

An early love-shaft grazed his heart,
And still the scar will ache and smart.

ROSEBY.

Ravenna, December, 1791.

You ask me whether crossing the Alps I not bring Antonia into my memory? In good sooth, Frewin, (for you know I never disguise any thing from you,) it did; and at more vividly and poignantly than I had expected. My heart must have been more fully touched in that matter than I chose to confess, even to myself; for the lapse of four years, and the intervention of divers other

~~enough~~ during that time, have not, I find, served wholly to efface the scar of the wound which my heart received at Tours. I certainly loved her more deeply than I would acknowledge to myself, at the time; and I am the more sure of it, from the frequency with which I have made the acknowledgement since. Once or twice, do you know? I have felt a sort of a something approaching to regret that I did not ~~hang~~ it, I can scarcely write the words—but I believe I mean that I sometimes have almost regretted that I did not *marry her*! You will stare at this; indeed I stare at it, now that I find it put into plain tangible words before me; but something very like the sensation has passed across my heart, in a less defined shape, more than once. And, to my credit be it spoken, I never ~~once~~ have ~~regretted~~—on the contrary, I have always re-

iced—that our intercourse did not terminate in another way, which, I will confess, of the two, occurred to me the more frequently, at the time. You see there are some hopes of me yet;—or rather I am not so bad as have sometimes been painted.

But four years are passed since then—and, with some persons, four years carry a good deal upon their wings. The difference between twenty-three and twenty-seven is not very great, as far as mere age goes—but, with my heart feels, if my body does not, that it has known its best days already. I experience, occasionally, certain qualms of ‘vanity and vexation of spirit,’ which seem to me awfully akin to the Archbishop of Granada’s homily—they smack of the decline of youthful warmth and force of feeling. Again, I sometimes feel a twinge for certain of my exploits of a few years’ back, which

used to sit most lightly on my memory :— but my conscience, now and then, suffers from indigestion,—though my stomach, I thank Heaven! as yet is free. All this seems to me to say, “Sir, you are getting old, in heart, if not in constitution,—if not in outward semblance, at least in inward feeling.” And what can I answer to so very disagreeable and discourteous a speech?— Why nothing; except that I am afraid it is only too true. I am the more confirmed in this belief from the feelings, with regard to Antonia, which I have actually frightened myself with, by putting into such express and definite terms as I have just now done, for the first time. When a man begins to regret that he did not marry one of his early loves, it is a sure sign that his heart is no longer so young as it was. When it looks back instead of looking forward, he may

assured that 'the yellow leaf' is approaching.

Ah ! Charles, I may talk lightly of the matter as much as I chuse,—but I have not felt the less acutely, on this subject, for all that. When I first came into Italy, and saw that beautiful country of her's, of which we had so often spoken to me in such rapture, as we used to sit together by the side of the Loire,—I confess my heart swelled with the remembrance of all that had passed between us ; and (you will scarcely believe me) I burst into a flood of tears. This is not like me, you know :—I am not *larmoyant*—and, therefore, I have the more belief in my tears, when I do shed them. These told me, that, amidst all that had passed since we parted, Antonia's image had remained in one of the inmost folds of my heart, and, though occasionally overlooked

and forgotten, it still held its place undisturbed; and, when the fantasy of the moment had passed away, that it appeared again, in full and fond memory. In truth, she was an enchanting creature!—*Belle-et-bonne*, I used to call her, and assuredly none ever deserved the appellation better;—so amiable, so gentle, and yet with such firmness of mind and energy of understanding—and then such fondness, such fervour of feeling! Oh! it was a crying sin to sport with a heart so affectionate and noble as her's!—And to think that such a mind and such feelings should be cramped and chilled in the gloomy routine of a convent! Often and often, in the midst of scenes of gaiety, a pang has shot across my heart to think that I had been the cause of burying her there. Such buoyant animation, such intensity of life in all her spirits and her feelings,—a

convent must indeed have been to her as
silling, and almost as repulsive, as the grave
self. In the only letter I ever received
om her, however much she strove, from
onsideration for my feelings, to conceal it,
-it was evident that, with her youth and
outhful feelings, she shrank from this living
eath. But the only alternative which was
pen to her, she shrank from still more—
marriage with an indifferent and distasteful
bject. I say that I feel I caused her tak-
ng the veil, for I cannot but think she
ould have preferred the match her father
roposed to her, if it had not been for the
ircumstances attending the close of her re-
idence in France. If her heart had been
noccupied, she would, I think, have felt
o insurmountable repugnance to the person
whom her father had chosen for her husband
-at least, not so great as that with which

she entered a cloister, and cut herself off from the world, for ever.

Whether she had any hope in the letter she wrote to me, that I might be so far moved by it as to come to Italy, and save her from her impending fate, I cannot accurately judge; but the strong inclination of my mind is to the negative. In the first place, there was no expression of doubt or hope throughout her letter; on the contrary, she speaks of her taking the veil, as of an event near and certain. Secondly, I am well convinced that her delicacy was too great and real thus indirectly to offer herself to a man, who, she must have been aware, had himself thrown the obstacles between them, which he afterwards affected to lament—nay (paradoxical as it may seem) which he did lament in fact. But, what should decide the question, her letter was written at a date,

which rendered my arrival in Italy before her sacrifice, next to impossible. The only reason, which for a moment caused me to entertain the contrary supposition, was, that if I had received her letter in time, I should, without hesitation, have set off for Italy, and saved her from so melancholy a fate, by asking her mine at once and for ever. It is, indeed, since this final bar of impossibility has been placed between us, that the regrets, of which I have spoken at the beginning of his letter, have grown in force upon me. But, however I might have acted, I had no opportunity of choice, for, in consequence of being absent from Paris, and of my repeated change of abode just at that period, her letter followed me half over the Continent, for several months after the time I ought to have received it, and after the time when she had left the world for ever.


You may suppose that I have not omitted to visit the place where Antonia lived. It is a village, a few miles on this side Bologna, just at the foot of the Apennines. I found that her father was dead; she herself, I was told, had been above two years in a convent in Tuscany, but where exactly, my informant could not say. He seemed to consider the other side of the Apennines a country which it was sufficient to know generically, but as for any specific detail, that was not to be looked for.

He pointed out, however, the house where Antonia's father had lived. It had, since his death, been sold, and had passed into the hands of strangers. It was in vain, therefore, even if I could have gained access to it, to have looked for any thing bearing reminiscence of Antonia; but I went to inspect the house, because she had dwelt in it—and

the garden, because she had described it to me so often.

I do not wonder, indeed, at her admiration of its beauty. The house is an Italian villa, at the extremity of the village,—white, with a wide projecting roof, but in no way particularly remarkable, except for its situation: that, indeed, is eminently charming. The garden is extensive, and planted with the most luxuriant shrubs and flowers. At the extremity there is a terrace, with a seat upon it, which, during our meetings on our green knoll, above the Loire, Antonia had so often spoken of, and always with the fondness which we feel for the abode of our youth. The view from thence is truly enchanting. On one side the rich valley winds, studded with villas and villages, thickening into suburbs, till the towers of Bologna closed the horizon; on the other,

at the distance of a very few miles, the dark Apennines rise abruptly, as a barrier to the sight, tufted and covered with their deep chesnut woods—and, in one place, receding far into the distance, with hills and peaks rising above one another, the last mingled undistinguishably with the blue clouds which cover them. With the freedom which a traveller sometimes takes—which *I* always take, at least when I have an object,—I entered the garden, and seated myself upon the bench from which this prospect is visible. As I recognised the points of it, one by one, as I searched for them from Antonia's often repeated descriptions,—I sighed to think that four eternal walls now bounded her actual, as well as her moral vision—that, formed to give and to receive happiness beyond the vast majority of ~~her~~ fellow-creatures, she tasted nothing but gloom and bitterness—and that *I* was the cause of all.



I hope, most truly and fervently, that as a Catholic she has comforts and consolations in her present mode of life, which I, heretic as I am, can scarcely believe—for, if I were fully assured that her situation is to her what it would be to me, I would move heaven and earth to find out (what I have hitherto avoided seeking) the exact position of her convent, and carry her off from it, in spite of the Pope, the Inquisition, and the Devil himself to boot.

But no—I hope she is tranquil at least, if not happy; I hope, above all, that I may never see her again to mar that tranquillity,—I have not sought her, and I shall not seek her; for, at all events, my heart has grown old enough to know that it is a very different thing to keep out of temptation, and to resist temptation when exposed to it.

EXTRACT X.

"Get thee to a nunnery."

HAMLET.

Florence, November, 1782.

MY DEAR FREDWIN,—

THE Devil, sure, has a spite against me; and is resolved that if I don't fall, it shall not be for want of his laying traps and stumbling-blocks in my path. I had certainly made the best resolutions, with regard to Antonia,—and, what is more, I had stuck to them;—when, lo! they are broken for me, not by me,—and, shunning temptation on one side, I am driven headlong into it on the other,—“*Incidit in Scyllam*”—you know the rest.—But to the facts.

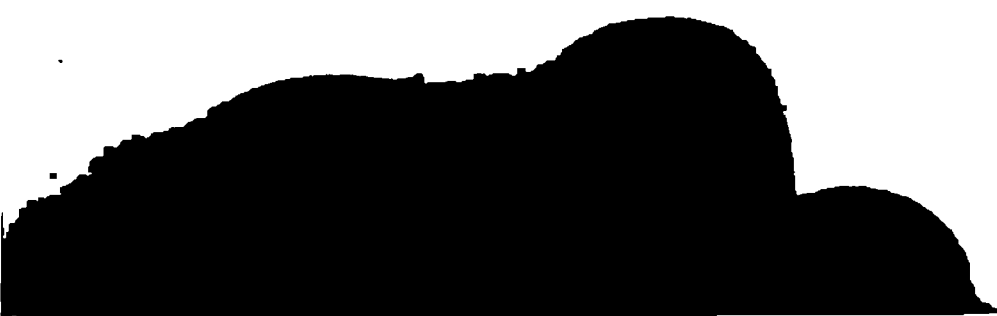
I went, last week, to attend the celebration of high mass, on the occasion of All Saints' Day, at the church attached to the Convent of ———. The part of the church where the nuns are, is partitioned off most effectually from that into which the public is admitted;—they are fully veiled, so that their voices, in singing the service, are the only feminine attribute which is perceptible to the *οἱ πολλοί*. This church is very celebrated for the manner in which the anthems, &c. are performed; and the whole service is esteemed to be of such magnificence and effect, that it is always the church which is singled out and recommended to foreigners who wish, on the occasion of great festivals, to see mass celebrated in all its pomp and splendour. And very splendid and magnificent it was, no doubt;—too much shifting of clothes and of posture among the priests.

I thought, for real simplicity and solemnity of effect.—but, certainly, as a whole, it was very gorgeous and imposing. The music, especially, from the assistance of the vast number of female voices, was fine in the extreme: and I came away, certainly, glad that I had gone, and with feelings moved and excited by the service I had witnessed. Perhaps the mass may have somewhat contributed to this:—for, undoubtedly, I never see one of them without thinking of poor Antonia, and feeling a yearning of the heart, which fits it for soft and solemn impressions. In this instance, I had good reason to think of her, if I had known all;—and lucky it was for me, I did not know; for there certainly would have been a scene if I had—and then the Lord knows what might have happened! In two words, Antonia was one of the nuns, whose voices I was listening to,

—and whose appearance raised a general, but certainly only a general, feeling and remembrance of her! How do I know she was here?—From the best of all authorities, her own.

Two days after All Saints' Day, I was passing along the Lung' Arno about dusk, when a woman, wrapped in a veil, came close by my side, and asked me if my name were Blount.—I was not the man to balk at an adventure; so I answered that it was. She then slipped a letter into my hand, and disappeared in an instant. I did not attempt to follow her, but continued on my way, somewhat curious. I reflected that what this missive, thus mysteriously conveyed, might contain, but without the conception of its being what I now find it was a letter from home.—It is a copy of it—

“I have had a considerable struggle with myself before I could determine to write to you. It is, I believe, against the duties which I have taken upon me; but I could not bear to think that you were so near me, and that you should have no tidings of even whether I exist or not. At the ceremony in the Church of ——— yesterday, I was within a few yards of the place where you were sitting; I had a full view of you; I saw you looking upon us, as we sat ranged above you. You little thought that a heart was beating there, almost to bursting, at the sight of you! How I kept myself from fainting, when I first saw you, I cannot tell: I exerted, I believe, a stronger effort of self-command than I ever used before: and as, fortunately, we had to kneel almost immediately after, I had some little time to recover myself unobserved. Oh!



Philip!* you can have no idea how seeing you again so suddenly, so unexpectedly, after so long time, affected me! The blood rushed to my heart, till I thought it would have burst; and then again it darted through my veins with the heat of fire. I thought that time, and penitential thoughts, and religious exercises, had disciplined me better; had enabled me—not to forget you, oh! no—but to think of you with the calmness befitting my present state. But the sight of you shattered the work of years in a moment! My memory leaped over the intervening time, and recalled the days which we passed together; the green knoll where we used to sit, and the Loire which rolled beneath our feet!

* The original letter is in Italian, in which the name is *Filippo*, a much more soft and romantic appellation than its English synonyme. But in translating it, I thought it would seem affected to leave the English name in Italian.—ED.

But these dear dreams could not last ; they were dissolved almost as soon as they were formed ; for the voices of my sisters rose in the swell of the anthem ; and I remembered what and where I was ; that my thoughts ought to be fixed on heaven, and that they were wandering, instead, on man !

“ You are little altered, Philip ; scarcely at all. You are grown, indeed, into maturer manhood, but your eyes, your smile, your expression are the same ! I ought not to write thus ; it is sinful that I should do so : but can I, can I, let you be in the same city with me, breathe the same air, nay, be close to me as you were yesterday, and not write *once* to you, one word to say, that time, and absence, and duty have failed to eradicate you from my heart ?—that you are still loved, and ah ! that you will be ever ? You are prayed for too, Philip. In the

prayers, which I breathe, and they are fervent ones, for pardon for my thoughts thus wandering towards you—you are included in the supplication; and oh! those prayers are heard. My heart feels so relieved when I rise from them, that I feel assured, when this world, and its cares, and its pains are passed away, we shall meet to part no more, above! Farewell—farewell!—This is the last time you will ever hear from me; but you will always live in my heart!—Adieu! To all within these walls, I am sister Agnes,—but to you, I am still, I am ever, *your* Antonia.”

You may suppose, dear Charles, that this letter moved me not a little. All the feelings which I had once experienced towards Antonia rose renewed within me; nay I loved her better, more fervently, than ever!

For, before, I let her go from me, when I might have made her mine; now, when so fatal a bar was interposed between us, I would have given worlds to be united to her for ever. The first impression on reading her letter was unmingled pleasure; a warm thrill of delight at being still dear to her flushed over me; but on reading it a second, more critically and dispassionately, self-accusation and regret succeeded: for I could not conceal from myself that her mind and her situation were manifestly at variance. It was impossible, with such conflicts, she could be happy, or even resigned. Nay, I perceived she scrupulously avoided saying any thing touching her happiness; if she were so, she would have said so in direct terms; of that I was convinced. She knew that her happiness would have been the dearest consolation she could have given me, and

she would not have withheld from me such a blessing. And her seeing me too; that must have re-awakened all her stronger feelings with regard to me; nay, she said as much. All my good resolutions took wing in a moment: I determined to see her, to speak with her, to fly with her, if I found matters were as I thought them. Oh, Frewin! I have done as much as man could do. I abstained from seeking her out, though I knew that a few inquiries must enable me to trace her. I sought her not—but we met; fate threw us in each other's way; it must be meant that we should yet be united. Is it possible to resist such a letter as she has written me? The love which she expresses purposely, is sufficient to set a heart of ice on fire; but the love which unconsciously burns in every word, which expresses so much more than is directly said; can a man

merely mortal let matters rest as they are ? I cannot, I know : I will not attempt, I will not affect it. I have not sought this, I repeat ; but as it has ' fallen in my path,' human nature cannot avoid its prosecution.

I have been every day to the church of the Convent of ———, till I have been almost afraid of being remarked. Only a few nuns attend the mass on usual occasions, and whether any of the veiled figures be the one I seek, it is impossible for me to discover. I have not been able to procure any means of getting the letter, which I carry perpetually with me, conveyed ; for it is a matter of some delicacy, I assure you, for her sake even more than mine. Thus matters stand at present ; how they will end, Heaven only knows !

EXTRACT XI.

“ Hold, take this letter ; early in the morning
See thou deliver it.”

ROMEO AND JULIET.

[The Answer to Antonia's Letter.]

“ WHAT I experienced on the receipt of your letter, it would be vain to attempt to describe to you ; I shall not attempt it. From what you say were your own sensations on seeing me in the church, you may, perhaps, conceive it ; otherwise I am sure you could not. Oh, Antonia ! the joy, the unmingled, the rapturous joy, with which I first read the expressions of your unabated affection, soon gave way before the remem-

brance of the gulf betwixt us; the chilling reflection that where you are, thither can I not enter to join you! You will, perhaps, think it an instance of the exaggeration with which you used to reproach me of old, when I say, that during the ceremony on All-Saints'-Day, while I was looking upon you and your sisters seated above me, my thoughts were fixed upon you. Yet it is natural it should have been so. For though I had no idea that you yourself were before my eyes, yet I never see the religious habit upon a woman, but I think of you; but I think of (and curse it as I think) the bar which is fixed between us. Time has wrought no change in my feelings concerning you. Separated, and so separated, as we have been for years, my heart still yearns towards you with the same fondness which it felt when I first spoke to you of love. Nay, with more;

for time has ripened it, and given it increased powers by duration. I am no longer a boy, Antonia: I surely must know myself now, or I never shall. And I feel that my love for you is united with my very being; that it has become *part* of my heart; as long as that heart endures, it will endure. I have proved it through many an eventful hour; it is now permanent beyond all doubt or hazard.

“ I do not make professions of the truth of what I say; I conceive it would be lowering myself, and you, through me, if I did. You would not have placed confidence in one to whom it could be necessary to say that he does not speak falsely. But yet, I do not speak the *whole* truth; I cannot do so. Words have always been found weak to paint the *fullness* of a love like that which binds me to you.

“ I would not write thus—cost me what it

might, I would suppress, the expression at least, of these feelings totally, but that I am convinced *you are not happy where you are*. Antonia, you are not happy! you are not even resigned; not only the whole tenor of your letter shows it, but if you were so, I am confident you would have told me in direct and unequivocal words. You say nothing on the subject; then, you are *unhappy*. You know the assurance of your happiness would be the greatest blessing I could know on earth; you would not have withheld it from me if it had been consistent with truth.* You are unhappy in your present condition; you would be happier if it were changed. Need I say what change I offer to you? My

* Some of the foregoing expressions are almost *verbatim*, identical with those on this subject in the preceding letter. But as the two were written about the same time, it is very natural that the same words should rise to the pen, to express the same feelings.—ED.

arms are open to receive you ; my heart, my hand are at your feet. Fly with me to my own country, where freedom is inseparable from the soil, and where the determination of a rash moment cannot bind to misery for life. Come with me, dear, dear Antonia, to that English home, where, if any where on earth, Content has chosen his abode. Come, and, with those capabilities of giving and of receiving happiness which Heaven has showered upon you, *give* happiness, beyond the power of words to paint, to a heart which adores you ; *receive* that happiness which the uninterrupted, unhidden intercourse of affection like our's cannot fail to yield !

“ I know you will hesitate on account of the vows you have made ; of your having dedicated yourself, as you will say, to the service of Heaven. I do not propose to enter

into any argument with regard to our respective creeds. You know of old that I am no bigot on that score; but pause maturely before you cast away the happiness of your own life, and of one who doats upon you, for a mistaken prejudice. Think whether the Heaven you serve can demand the sacrifice of the temporal happiness of one of its fairest creatures, solely from a few words having been spoken in the rash bitterness of a disappointed spirit. With your warm and keen feelings, and buoyant and energetic mind, you never were formed for the cloister. You know, Antonia, this truth; and you know that you become more and more convinced of it daily. You were formed to shed contentment and joy upon a happy home; to be the centre of a circle, whose happiness springs from and returns to you! Dear Antonia, how often you have spoken

to me with delight of that home, which you had known only as a child; but which you loved enthusiastically, because it *had* been the home of your childhood? I have been there, Antonia. I made a pilgrimage thither before I had been in Italy a month. At that time, I did not expect ever to see you again; and my heart swelled even to tears, as I sat upon *the bench on the terrace*, of which you had spoken so often and so fondly, and as I recognized the scene which lived in my heart from your description. It is in such scenes as these, dearest, that your lot should be cast, amid the charities and amenities of *home*; a word which, being peculiar to our language, proves at least, that the thing it expresses has more need of expression with us, than in any other country? — Do you remember my teaching you this word? and your saying that it was easier to

· speak, · and of finer · sound than · any other word of my language that you had heard?


· “ Dear, dear Antonia, I could converse thus with you for ever. One recollection calls up another, till I could fill a volume with questions of the heart, all beginning · “ Do you remember?” Yes! · you *do* remember: I have no fear that you forget any touch of feeling during our former intercourse. Oh! Antonia, let that intercourse be renewed! Let it be made nearer, dearer, because more permanent, than ever! · Come with me to make the happiness of my “ English fire-side,”— a scene for which you may well exchange an “ Italian sky;” beautiful, and dear to you, as the last is and must be.

· “ Do not decide hastily. Extreme as my anxiety will be till I know your determination, I had rather it were not hastily made. On the one hand, I should be loth

that you should hereafter say, or feel without saying, that your resolution had been taken in a moment of tumultuous feeling, when your judgment had not fair play. On the other, I should be still more deeply grieved, if you allowed your prejudices to prevent your weighing the matter maturely, and exerting your excellent understanding upon it in all its bearings. Use your reason, Antonia; let it freely work, and I do not fear for the result.

“One thing more only I have to beg. If, as I most sincerely trust will not be the case,—if you should in the first instance decide upon remaining where you are, and thereby consigning me to wretchedness,—admit me, at any rate, to say a few words to you in person, before you pronounce my doom for ever. The meanest criminal is not condemned unheard; and I am not that to you,

Antonia. It is very possible that there may be some parts of this letter which may jar upon your mind unexplained. I have written under an agitation of spirits so great, as utterly to incapacitate me from weighing expressions nicely, and judging of forms of speech. My ideas and feelings have been too eager for utterance to pause about the mode; and moreover, I write in a language with which I am not thoroughly familiar. Besides, one-half hour's conversation is worth a world of letters. Any momentary misapprehension is cleared away at once, instead of encreasing into importance by furnishing food for correspondence. An objection has the reasons to refute it opposed to it at once, instead of growing upon the mind, merely from having remained there for some time unchecked. If, as I trust your strong sense will lead you to do, you decide to leave at



once the cold cloister in which you are buried; it is, perhaps, as well that we should not previously meet; but if the bent of your mind be the other way, I entreat you, I conjure you, allow me to see you *once* before your resolution is finally taken. Surely, Antonia, I may ask this much at your hands.

“Dear, dearest love, my heart expands with unutterable feelings at being thus once again in communication with you. Our young days are renewed to my heart once more; our ‘moonlight walks by the Loire’ will, at last, receive their fitting consequence! Adieu, best-beloved! I need not say with what feverish impatience I shall await your answer.

“P. B.”

[Antonia's reply.]

“I said, when I wrote to you before, that that would be the last time I should address

you; but I feel that your letter requires some answer, and that it would be acting unworthily by you, if I did not give it:—but, after this, our correspondence *must* close. Yes, Philip! this intercourse must cease: my peace of mind—my welfare here and hereafter, alike demand it. I have taken some days to weigh the contents of your letter; though, perhaps, I ought not to have admitted them to any consideration. But I would not that you should think I had treated your propositions slightly; and (shall I confess it?) my heart pleaded strongly for you. I *have* weighed maturely all you have said, and worthy it is of your warm and noble heart. I recognize your ardour of feeling, and uncompromising frankness of character, in every line. I *do* believe you, Philip; it would be a paltry affectation if I pretended that I did not. Your unreserv-

ed and generous offers prove at once, did your expressions need any proof, the truth of all you say. I believe, too, that you know your feelings, and that you do not speak merely from the impulse of youthful passion. I believe that passion to be matured and firm ; and sweet, sweet has that conviction been to my heart. Oh ! Philip, that heart clings too fondly to you still ;—bitter, bitter has been my struggle to wrench it from you now !

“ But, No !—my vows were not breathed ‘in a rash moment ;’ they were the fruit of thought and meditation ; and they cannot be broken without casting deadly sin upon my soul. When the thought of you has risen between me and my duties, I have, as it were, compounded with myself for its admittance, by the reflection that it was impossible we could ever meet again,

and by joining your name and image in my supplications to the Throne of Mercy. But if I now were to bring these thoughts to action, and prove false to the religious oaths which bind me, their source would be too apparent; I should have been serving the world and Satan, and not Him to whose service I am sworn!

“ I believe you to have been candid with me: I will be so likewise. You are right in your supposition; I am not happy in my present state. If my lot had been so cast as to have placed me in the bosom of a *home** such as you describe, I will not deny that I think I should have been more fitted for that sphere than for the one which I now fill. But it has been ordered otherwise; and I must fulfil my destiny as best I may. Yet do not think I am miserable. No! It is true I have not the strong enthusiasm,

* This word is in English in the original letter.—Ed.

the *unction*, which prove, that of some of my sisters this is the real vocation.—But I enjoy calmness at least; and my religious duties are always, while they last, soothing to my soul. I am not happy, I confess it. Love mingled too early and too largely in my cup of life, for this draught not to be distasteful to me. But GUILT has not yet been mixed with it; and I feel that if it were, it would be far and far more bitter than all that I have tasted yet. It is vain to argue the point, with respect to how far my vows are binding. You cannot but know that all you say on that head is sophistry. If they had been compulsory, some shadow of excuse might, perhaps, have been raised for breaking them; but they were made voluntarily, and they have severed me from the world for ever! My conscience cannot but regard them as sacred,

and as we act according to our conscience,
so shall we be judged.

" Ah. Philip !—my heart has pleaded for
you far more strongly than my reason, which
you invoke so earnestly. And now that
my resolve is fixed, I will own that I have
now or twice been shaken in my determina-
tion almost to its fall. But then the idea
that I should be an apostate and guilty thing
has risen before me, and I have shrunk back
appalled. No ! on the path of guilt I will
not enter: you yourself would not, cannot,
desire that I should do so. The course you
urge me to is such to my eyes, and accord-
ing to our light must we act, and shall be
tried. The fearful sentence

" *Vai che entrate, lasciate ogni speranza*"

might well be fixed over the path of sin ;
if once I entered it, I should never enjoy

one moment more of happiness, or even of hope.

“ I will not see you, Philip ; I am sure when you have read this, you will no longer desire it. I understand all you have said fully ; I can figure to myself all you would say, but it could be of no avail ; or perhaps I dread that it should be of avail,—that I should be persuaded, though I could not be convinced. If it were not impossible that we should meet, I would not say thus much ; but in this, the last communication we can ever hold together in this world, why should I strive to conceal from you how unboundedly my heart is yours ? Make no attempt to see me. My reputation, nay my life, would, in all likelihood, be sacrificed if you did. Neither will I again receive any letter from you. I have broken up the medium of intercourse which has hitherto existed ; it is

the only one possible, and any attempt on your part to open a new one, would be attended with little less danger to me than an endeavour to effect a meeting. I distrust myself, and, therefore, I have rendered it impossible for me to be exposed to temptation.

“ And now dear, ever-dear Philip, it only remains for me to bid you farewell. Yet I pause before I can bring myself to say that last word to you, which will close our intercourse for ever. I scarcely know whether I am glad, or whether I should grieve, at its having been thus renewed for a moment. It has broken, it is true, upon the calm of my life, and has thrown my thoughts and feelings into a channel, which it will require, I fear, much time and painful exertion to force them from again. But then I have received the assurance of your unabated, nay of your

increased love for me, for I do believe that “you love me better than ever.” How dear that conviction is to my heart, dearest, dearest, I need not, I cannot say to you.

“And yet, postpone it as I may, I must say farewell, at last. I send you with this a morsel of my clipped hair, place it by the side of the long tress I formerly gave you—(I do not fear but that you have preserved it)—and when you look upon them together, you will regard them as a token that no change of time, of situation, I might almost say, of existence, could alter *my* feelings towards *you*. May God for ever bless you.”

EXTRACT XII.

“ Away for England !—————
On toward Calais, ho !”

KING JOHN.

Florence, November 1792.

YOU will see me, my dear friend, in a short time after the receipt of this letter. You will be surprised at this piece of news ; but so it is. I am about to bring my long peregrinations to a close, and return to England direct. You will easily guess that something peculiar must have happened thus to induce me, being at Florence, to set off across the Alps in the middle of winter, without even going on to Rome, to seeing which, you know, I have always looked for-

ward with so much eagerness. But I would not remain another month in Italy, for the iron crown of the Lombards; I will get back to Dodderidge, as being, of all places to which I have access, the most unlike every thing I have been seeing lately. Do send down to old Ward, and tell her to get the house habitable for me, as quick as she can. I shall be home by Christmas, now. 'Why what has come over the man?' you will say. Truly, Frewin, I have scarcely the heart to tell. Perhaps the enclosed may throw some light upon the subject.* You may guess my feelings at the receipt of this. Truly I had expected to come to England, as soon as I am doing now, but with my companion for life by my side.

I cannot say that my first impulse was to

* The enclosed was a copy of the letter, given in the foregoing extract.

obey her. I saw clearly that if I could reach her, I should be able to prevail upon her to accompany me; and I persuaded myself that it would be for her happiness, as well as my own. For two days, I went about with a letter about me, imploring, insisting on an interview—seeking some way to get it delivered: but on reading over more calmly what she said, I saw such an air of candour and truth beaming through the whole, I saw that her impression of the guilt of breaking her vows was so strong, (it must have been so, indeed, to counteract so powerful a passion) that I determined to yield to her determination, and not to mar her happiness more than I have done already. Setting aside the danger to which I must expose her, by endeavouring to force a communication without her consent,—I saw, indeed, that the reasons with which I had been de-

ceiving myself were, as she said, sophistry! —No! I would not, I could not bear to lead her into what she considered guilt!

So I ordered Eustache, to his great amazement, to pack up my things, and get my passports for France; and the day after tomorrow, I shall be rolling northward. Dear Frewin, I shall be rejoiced to see you again; for few scape-graces, like myself, have the blessing of so good a friend. You will find me, I think, altered a good deal, even since we parted at Paris two years ago. This last business has been, I will confess it, a heavy blow upon me. I had suffered enough in these matters before! Oh! these women, these women, they were born to be the fate and the bane of my life; and yet I have enjoyed some happy moments with them, too. But the happiness was always counted by moments, and the unhappiness by months and years! And,

after all, I have not, I fear, suffered half so much as I have caused suffering. Poor Antonia, now ! Here am I thinking myself exceedingly wretched, and I am so : but I have change of scene, and active exertion if I choose it, to vary the current of my thoughts, and give fresh impulse to my energies ; but she, dear, dear, unhappy creature !—has nothing but the monotonous routine of a conventual life, and the four walls of that infernal convent, (which I wish were burned to the ground) to draw her feelings from the train of bitter sensation into which they have run.

“ Relentless walls whose darksome round contains

Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains,
Shrines where their vigils pale-eyed virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep:
E'en here, where frozen chastity retires,
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.”

— I might go on through the whole poem,*—and, with the exception of those passages which relate to the retrospection of guilt, and the calling of the lover, it would all be applicable in her mouth. All the agonizing regrets, and convulsive throes and contests of passion, would find, alas! a fitting speaker in poor, poor Antonia. Oh! Charles, I have loved that woman as I never loved any but her; and yet I have caused all the wretchedness which she has known! I have been the black spirit of her destiny—the *Ebène* who has attended her lot through life.† And, notwithstanding this, I have the face to complain of what I have suffered, and suffer from my intercourse with women!

But I am soured, and out of humour to-

* Eloisa to Abelard.

† Mr. Blount seems to allude to Voltaire's Apologue *Le Blanc et le Noir*.—*Ed.*

day, with myself, and every thing, and every body ; I will not vent my spleen upon you any more, but say at once, not adieu, but *au revoir*. Believe me, I look forward to nothing, at this moment, with so much pleasure, as that of again shaking you by the hand.

Ever your's most affectionately,

P. B.

EXTRACT XIII.

“ But now I need the bustling world,
The excitement which its vortex gives—
For while in that my heart is whirled,
Then only can it say it lives:
Although I feel contempt and hate
For all I do, and bear, and see,—
Yet still it is my wretched fate
To feel how needful 'tis to me!”

ANON.

[From the Diary.]

London, February, 1794.

WHEN I look back to what my ideas were, when I returned to England thirteen or fourteen months ago, as to the life I should probably lead here, I cannot but smile at the inaccuracy of my anticipations. Truly we

are not often very excellent prophets of our own doings. But yet, at my age, it was much more natural that the pain, which tugged at my heart-strings, should seek to be numbed by dissipation, than find soothing in retirement. I had not been a fortnight at Dodderidge before I found this out,—and what has been the consequence? Why, 'faith I don't very much like to look at the consequence; for no man can lead a life of dissipation for a twelvemonth, without having some points of reminiscence which he would wish blotted from the calendar. And yet, a desperate twinge has come across me occasionally. Poor Antonia! her fate sticks closer to my heart than I could wish it. Who could have thought that I should have loved that woman so dearly, so engrossingly, when a word would have made her mine, and I would not speak it? And why, for-

sooth? because I would not sacrifice my liberty! And what have I done with my liberty since then?—I have added several notches to the score against me; I have increased the store of unhappiness for my age to look back upon, and I have made several very deserving persons wretched! And what am I doing now—now that I don't care a button for my liberty, and would have sacrificed it to Antonia if I could? Why, I am doing much the same as I have done, only that I am crowding more into a shorter space of time.

Why, then, do I not pull short up, when I know so well that I am going in a hand-gallop to the devil? Why, because the ride is strong excitement, and without excitement, I cannot exist.

“What is peppered the highest is surest to please:”
my palate has become as vitiated with regard

bear to touch! How is it that he has all these blessings, and I have none of them, though my life has been almost devoted to women, and he scarcely ever spoke to half-a-dozen, before his wife? I believe that is the very reason. I have frittered my heart away—while his was whole and healthful to stake upon that cast which has made the fortune to his life. Ah! if I had married Antonia when I first knew her, what a difference would it have made in my fate! But, in those days, I regarded marriage as Lord Rochester did,—as a curse on the dog that bit him: and truly I have had my reward.

And what shall I do, when I begin to descend the hill, if I feel this vacuum and these pangs before I am at its summit? Truly, that is a part of the picture I do not overmuch like to look to. I cannot look within, for my heart

is chilled and shrunken, and probably that is the cause why I am obliged to cast my eyes abroad, and seek my excitation in the vortex and bustle of the world. Not that I care a pinch of snuff for the world—not that I am not disgusted every ten minutes with something or other I see going on around me; often with something I am doing myself; but still I cannot live without it, or out of it. I am like a man become so confirmed a drunkard that he is obliged to begin the day with drams, before he is fit to do anything.

But what can have led me into so gloomy a train of thought to-day? I had a feverish night, I believe; I dreamed of Antonia, and my rest is always disturbed, when I do that. But I must not think of her; I must not think of these things at all; they are of no avail, and they only serve to make me hipped

and wretched. I will go out; my phaeton is at the door, and it is nearly three o'clock, when Fanny promised to meet me. And what am I doing in that quarter? *N'importe*; we shall see as we get along.

EXTRACT XIV.

“ And how felt *he*, that wretched man
Reclining there—while memory ran
O'er many a year of guilt and strife,
Flew o'er the dark flood of his life,
Nor found one sunny resting-place,
Nor brought him back one branch of grace !
“ There *was* a time” he said in mild
Heart-humbled tones—“ thou blessed child,
When young and haply pure as thou,
I look'd and pray'd like thee—but now ——”

LALLA ROOKH.


[From the Diary.]

London, March, 1794.

IN my early years, I lived with my family a little way out of London. Since that time the rapid increase of building has made the place I allude to *quite* town ; but it was then

partly in the fields; and my mother being an invalid caused us to choose that situation for the sake of the air. These were, perhaps, the happiest days of my life; they were certainly the most innocent; for the contamination of School had not yet touched my youthful mind and heart, and the cultivation of both was looked to with no common care and tenderness.

As I write, it scarcely seems to me possible that I should myself be the subject of what I say. It is much more as if I looked back to what I know of others, than to that which has happened to myself. For I was early in the world, in the world's ways, in the world's wickedness. I was entirely my own master at a very early period of life; a privilege of which I was sufficiently glad and proud at the time, and which I have as sufficiently regretted since.



It is not my purpose here to enter into a narrative of what I have done and borne since that period ; I merely mean to commit to paper an incident which occurred to me a few days ago, and recalled, in a very forcible manner, the long dormant train of feeling associated with my youthful days.

The house in which those early days were chiefly spent, is, as I have said, some little way out of town. Since then, I have passed it very rarely ; perhaps not above two or three times. My habits and haunts were not such as were likely to lead me to so remote a situation ; and the circle which formerly existed there, has (alas ! and alas again !) been, long since, wholly broken up and dispersed. When I *have* passed it on those few and rare occasions, I certainly have looked up at the windows, and sighed heavily as I have done so ; but I never allowed such feel-

ings to rest more than a moment in my heart; I always passed on as fast as my feet, or my horse, could carry me, and sought, in acceleration of pace, dissipation of the thoughts at the moment existing in the mind. But the last time I passed it was under different circumstances; and has, whether I would or no, made a deeper impression upon me:— I had with me a young creature whose ruin that day was to seal.

I never was, at the worst periods of my life, systematically, what is called a seducer. I never deliberately set about the seduction of any one. And yet, I have more than once been the means of leading a fellow-creature into error, of plunging a fellow-creature into guilt. This apparent contradiction is easily explained; indeed, it cannot appear one to most men of a few years' experience in the world. I do not now

speak of cases of higher passion, where innocent admiration almost imperceptibly ripens into equivocal interest, which again gradually increases into criminal love;—where no plans of seduction are made or resorted to, but where the two hearts, by gentle degrees, incline towards each other, as it were by one accord, regardless of all bar or obstacle; as the two trees, in the device, bend simultaneously till they unite, unmindful of the deep and rapid stream which flows between them.* It is not to such cases that I now allude; indeed the term “seduction” is seldom applied to *them* by any one. It is more frequently used with reference to persons where, not marriage, but inequality of condition is the obstacle (for in higher life such instances very rarely occur), where the very

* I have seen a seal, with the device, described above, and the motto “*Le destin nous sépare, le penchant nous unit.*”

difference of rank increases, probably, the admiration at first, and the devotedness afterwards, of the unfortunate girl; and, at a first view, necessitates such an intention on the man's part from the very beginning. But such men draw a distinction in morals; which, after all, perhaps, is not wholly unfounded in justice and reason. There are many of them who scruple to be the original corrupter, yet are quite ready to take advantage of previous corruption; that is, where the corruption has destroyed virtue, but not delicacy—has undermined principle, but has not yet substituted immodesty or coarseness. But men who begin with this belief, and these intentions, are not unfrequently mistaken. They find that they really are debauching an innocent mind, where they imagined some earlier lover had spared them that guilt. There are, for instance, several

female professions, which I need not indicate, that point out, to such persons, those who are engaged in them as, what they would call, *fair game*. That this general supposition is extremely often false, there can be no hesitation in asserting ; but it is some time before the exception is discovered ; for it is, indeed, most difficult to distinguish between the truth and falsehood of assertions made invariably in all cases alike. But why not, it may be said, stop short when you *do* discover what it is you are doing ? Alas ! he must be one very little skilled in human nature who would put the question. To say nothing of the real (it is difficult to find an exact word —suppose I use the most general) *attachment* which may have sprung up in the meantime, we all know the force of that most influential feeling, the desire of success. Such men do not like to rest under the galling

consciousness of having attempted and failed; and they must be it recollected, from the circumstances, be among those whose minds and hearts have undergone the chilling action of frequency and self-indulgence.

This is a general view of the matter; but I believe it to be of frequent application; and it is undoubtedly so to my immediate case. The person to whom I allude belongs to one of the professions I have noticed; and she has, in addition, a levity of manners which contributed to mislead me. There was something, however, very striking and brilliant in this levity. Her conversation had quickness and point, if not wit,—and great buoyancy, spirit, and animation. She was frequent in laughter, and even loud; yet far from being coarse or boisterous.* But

* “Her laugh, full of life, without any controul, But the sweet one of gracefulness, rang from her soul!”—MOORE.

thigh it was by no means vulgar or un-
refined, it at first conveyed a suspicion to
that she had not any great acuteness or
depth of feeling. It is not often, indeed,
that this great gaiety, and liveliness, and
coquetry, are co-existent with much sensi-
tivity; but *when* they are, nothing can by
possibility be more delightful. They have
all the advantages of contrast and relief,
added to their own intrinsic charms and
merits.

In person, I cannot say that she is
beautiful; but she has a youthfulness and
freshness, and brightness of appearance,
very much in keeping with her unrepressed
youthfulness of manner. Her face, perhaps,
inclines to be too round and full; but her
cheeks are the reddest, and her teeth the
whitest that ever were seen; and they are
often seen, in the frequency of her bright and

good-humoured smile. She has a fine, open, dancing eye, and abundance of hair, flying usually over her face in fifty directions, and requiring her constantly to raise her pretty plump hand, to repress it into its proper quarters.

In what I have said of this person, I find that I have mixed my subsequent knowledge of her real innocence of character with the first impressions which her manner and appearance made upon me. For, truth to say, all this, at the time, seemed to me to be mingled with that indescribable air which bespeaks such light manner to be indicative of strong animal spirits subduing self-reproach and shame; which they do the more readily in one, whom the early want of strong grounding in the principle, together with the effect of general example and countenance has rendered little sensible of the real degra-

dation of the position of a fallen woman. But I was mistaken.

I did not, however, discover my mistake for a considerable time ; and when I was at last convinced that I really had been in error, I did *not* retract. I speak the truth, when I say, that I was pained at the discovery ; but that pain was not sufficient to deter me from my pursuit. Habit and a long course of self-gratification, and my increasing need of strong excitement to feel at all—these, added to the other motives of action, of which I have spoken above, induced me, after some remonstrances from that most disagreeable person, Conscience, to continue to advance. Of the circumstances which followed, I shall make no detail. Suffice it, that a short time ago, we were passing together the house of which I have already spoken, on our way to a village a few miles

~~from town~~, situated in that direction. I had ~~come this road~~, not, as will readily be supposed, for the sake of passing this house; but that I might not pass a house which lay on the other road, by the inhabitants of which I did not exactly desire to be seen so accompanied. The day happened to be Sunday; or rather, I should say, the day *was* Sunday, for there was no chance in the selection;—inasmuch as it was the only day in the week, on which my companion was wholly mistress of her own time. As we approached the house, I looked up at the well-known windows as usual; and, I don't know how it was, a very unusual sensation of self-accusation and reproach came across me. Still I should, I think, have passed on, minding it very little, if it had not been for a circumstance, trifling enough in itself, but which strongly contributed to increase the remorseful feeling of, which I have spoken.

It was about one o'clock, and the people were coming from Church. Just as we passed the door, a nursery-maid was knocking at it, accompanied by two children, a girl about eleven years old, and a boy about nine, each in the neat nice dress befitting the day, and with a red-morocco prayer-book in their hand. My tears, on the instant, sprang to my throat; but I gulped them, and passed on without speaking. The picture of my former state, of my former self, was thus, as I may say, presented to my eyes; and what, I said inwardly, what am I doing *now*? I looked, as it were, into the mirror of reflected time; and I beheld myself as I was when at the age of the child just entering my house. I recollected when, like him, I used to return from the worship of my God to the execution of His will; when the deep and reverential piety

which swelled in my young heart at the simple and solemn prayer, the burst of sacred music, and the mild yet fervent exhortation of the white-haired minister, softened, as I returned to my home, into the charities of domestic affection, the innocence and unreservedness of childish love! My heart was light, for it knew not sin, nor sin's consequence; the tears which I had shed, had left no furrows of guilty passion behind them. The tears that I have shed since ——— but of these I will not, I cannot, speak.

Why do I write thus? I wish to note an individual contrast; not to generalize in reflections like these. What I am about to say, would appear childish and trivial to many; but it was that very childishness which gave it its effect upon my mind. It was the reflection of what were my misdoings, my objects of ambition, my rewards, in those days, which

struck upon me in such severe and violent contrast.

One particular Sunday, of about that very period, rose upon my recollection with all the unaccountable distinctness and minuteness of suddenly-revived memory. I had begun the previous week in great disgrace, and ended it in high favour. I consequently had all that additional flush of happy feeling which the passing away of pain is sure to give. I had been very idle, and very passionate, and, at last, as I remember, had gone so far, in a burst of boyish fury, as to apply to my sisters' governess, under whose general tuition I still was, many opprobrious epithets, accompanied by as many oaths;—the direct crime of which was not a little aggravated by the surprise occasioned by finding me so familiar with such language. I was punished as punishment was conducted with us—

namely by banishment and solitude. - I shall never forget the bitterness of self-reproach, even of remorse, which I felt during the two days, and, still more, the two nights which my penance lasted. If I had committed a deep crime, I could not have felt more; nay, I have committed what might almost be considered such, without feeling half so much. I cried myself to sleep, and awoke from being choked with sobbing; and the reflections, which I made during the long dreary day, influenced, I do believe, my temper and my conduct for years afterward. When I was released, I applied with redoubled diligence, and profited accordingly. That very day, I was put into the Greek Grammar; and, besides learning the character, (no inconsiderable task at that age)—I, to use the schoolboy phrase, “could say down to the end of *μυσα*,” before Saturday

night. I regained favour gradually during the week ; and, at the end of it, I was rewarded by the permission (the withholding of which had been part of my former punishment) to wear *my first pair of boots*. I shall never forget the delight with which I pulled them on for the first time ;—a delight scarcely at all lessened by their being excruciatingly too tight for me, and needing the assistance of a stout footman, and of an infinity of soap, to get them on at all. I recollect walking to Church in them that Sunday, with the exaltation of the hero of a triumph, and certainly suffering the torments of a martyr.

All these circumstances are very childish—but they are real ; and any real feeling will always have its weight. These and other circumstances, *too* childish, perhaps, to put upon paper, rose in actual presence

to my view, on the very different Sunday of which I first made mention. And such, I thought, were my pleasures in those days!—what a different signification the term carries with it now! My deepest offence was a childish ebullition of rage; my severest punishment, the seclusion of a couple of days; my highest reward, an article of wished-for finery!—And now ——— *

What, indeed, were the circumstances of the *present* Sunday? I was about to bring certain and deep unhappiness on a person enjoying more happiness than many are given to enjoy;—I was about to plunge an innocent creature into irrevocable guilt and shame!

* It was this passage, and the following, which prompted me to choose the motto prefixed to this chapter. The quotation would probably have suggested itself to Mr. Blount, if the beautiful poem, from whence it is taken, had, at that time, been published. The same remark applies to the note at p. 66.—ED.

Was I the same being whose pursuits, and wishes, and fears, and feelings, had been so sinless?—I, whose whole habits of mind and heart had so long flowed in a fierce, turbid, and unhealthful course? That mind had become polluted and perverted, if not utterly vicious;—that heart now needed strong and stimulating food, no matter at what cost or sacrifice.

I was long silent before my companion noticed it. *She*, indeed, had sufficient cause to be absent and abstracted herself. Let any woman, who has done wrong, call to her recollection the few hours which preceded her fall; after the resolution was made, and before it was accomplished. They are “a phantasma,”—though not, perhaps, “a hideous dream;” at all events there is, at such times, a leaden, I might say, a *dogged* oppression of the spirits, which spreads

a misty feeling of unconsciousness over the whole mind and frame. My companion was in very much such a state, at this time. Her eye was less bright than usual, and more closed; and the blood had mounted to her cheek, and settled there in a large round spot of hot and lurid red. It was *I* who at last broke the silence, and I did it with a motive little, I think, to be expected.

What I am about to say would, I know, subject me to the laughter, if not the contempt, of two classes of persons. The one is that of those gentlemen to whom I have described myself too nearly to assimilate; the second is a very large proportion of the other sex.—The bad actions, with which I have to reproach myself, received no addition on that day.

EXTRACT XV.

“ Pleasures of memory !—oh, supremely blest,
And justly proud beyond a poet's praise,
If the pure confines of thy tranquil breast
Contain, indeed, the subject of thy lays !
By me how envied !—for, to me
The herald still of misery,
Memory makes her influence known
By sighs, and tears, and grief alone ;
I greet her as the fiend, to whom belong
The vulture's ravening beak, the raven's funeral song !

Written on a blank leaf of the

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

[From the Diary.]

Dodderidge, October, 1794.

It was a fine fiction of the ancients to represent Forgetfulness as the reward purchased by a certain degree of expiatory punishment. It was a fine fiction, for it had its

origin in a natural feeling,—one of the very few of which this can be said in their clumsy and profligate mythology. But *this* is real poetry, and, like all real poetry, closely akin to truth. Alas ! how many there are among us who would wish “to steep” not their “senses,” but their soul “in forgetfulness!”—how many there are to whom the waters of Lethe would be truly a nectareous draught !

I am well aware that there are many also who would throw from them such a gift at once ; to whom, indeed, it would be a curse. The days of youth are, like the spring of the physical year, the sowing-time of the seeds of happiness ; and it would be hard indeed if some of it did not fall upon good ground, and bear fruit and increase. There is scarcely any of us, it is to be hoped, who cannot, within the circle of his own knowledge, point

in some case of this kind ; to one who would
spurn at *Lethe*. Let us suppose, for in-
stance, a mother surrounded by her family,

“ ————— that small realm

Of love, which owns her as its only queen,
That world of heart of which she is the axis ;”—

—from all the sweet gradations from maturing
intellect and ripening loveliness in her eldest
born, to the first dawning of human reason
and beauty in the smiles and lisped words of
her infant one ; let us suppose her early
flood of the heart not to have run to waste,
or to more destructive overflow, but to have
resembled rather a full, deep, and rapid
stream, giving joy and brightness to all
around ; let us suppose her, to drop all
figure, to have been united to him whom
she would have singled from all mankind ;
whose youthful passion for her has become

matured into the strength and stability of manly love, gaining in depth and tenderness what it has lost (if it has lost any thing) in fervency ; who can say, in short, with all the truth of fondness,

“ How much the wife is dearer than the bride !”


—let us figure to ourselves a woman thus placed, giving and receiving these blessings, sharing and inspiring these affections ; would *she* drink of Lethe ?

But, alas ! there are the thorns of worldly pursuits, the stony ground of hard or callous dispositions, the scanty soil of slight and shallow heartedness, to choke and waste the good seed which the Great Sower scatters more or less lavishly over the early lives of all. In this, as in all things, the good stands single, while the evil has a thousand branches. There is only one line which will

carry the arrow to its mark ; every other direction, even to the breadth of a hair, will make the effort of the archer fruitless. If the picture which I have drawn above be recognized as a portrait by a few, how many must regard it to be only a fancy-piece ! Let us look for a moment upon its opposite. Let us turn to her who has been sacrificed for gold or for station, by parental cupidity and ambition ; who has been sold into a slavery worse than that of the negro,—the thralldom of the soul. Let us think upon the long long years of gradual martyrdom ; the wasting of the health, the languid sickening of the mind, the chronic heart-break (if I may so speak) which make up the measure of her destiny ; that killing *à coup d'épingles*, which is the most insupportable, because the most lasting, of torments. Let us suppose that there was one ray of morn-

ing sunshine before the clouding over of that troubled and gloomy day. Let us suppose that *she loved*; that she loved as the heart loves in youth, as women love at all times; that that young and beautiful affection was slaughtered on the shrine of wealth or worldly aggrandizement; that the oath which she swore at God's altar was an instant perjury—for what the lips spoke, the heart belied; then let us think of the succeeding time; the contest between affection and cold duty; the struggles of concealment; the sick sob of despair rising to her throat; the suppressed tears of agony aching in her brain!

Alas! alas! how many, how very many, there are who might recognize their portraits, *here*! Surrounded, probably, by all the attributes of wealth, they look bright in the sunlight of the world; and those who



judge by that light alone, think all is as it seems to be. But this beauty of outward radiance is but as the bloom upon a consumptive cheek; it is the effect, and, to the observant eye, the token, of the disease within. And what is Retrospection to such a woman as this? The look which she casts upon past time is like that which the Rich Man raised to Lazarus; it is that of the damned looking upon blessedness. Would *not this* woman drink of Lethe?

I am well aware that if the idea of sudden and complete forgetfulness be taken in its rigid sense, it would reduce us to a state of ignorance, bordering on imbecility: we should be like the new-born infant, without speech; without, indeed, any of those matters of common and every-day knowledge which seem to us natural rather than acquired. Perhaps, I should say that they seem to us more in the

light of powers than remembrances : and, when I speak of sudden oblivion passing over the mind, I would except *these* from its operations. It is what we have suffered, and still more what we have done, that it would lighten our hearts to have removed. The deeds that are gathered up against us by accusing time, and which flash across the memory like strokes of fire ; these, and the contrast between them and the days of early sinlessness ; between what is and what was ; the record of these is the " writing on the wall," which Lethe exists not to wash away.

When a man has lived much in the world, and as the world lives ; when the stamp of his fresh feelings, like the impress upon coin, has been worn away by collision ; when his passions have been indulged, and he has tasted the bitter fruit which springs from such sweet blossom ; if any thing

occur to bring before the memory of such a man the scenes of his early age,—what are his feelings then? Nothing can be truer than that all the pageants and indulgences of voluptuous and worldly life; all the conventional and factitious ideas and feelings which it engenders, vanish totally and at once before one touch of real nature. But the effect is pain, cutting pain. The heart swells, and tears gush from the eyes, but they are tears of bitterness. The fallen and stained man recollects the innocent child; the soul which needs the drams of social excitation, looks back to its former healthful and glad some state, and the simple food on which it lived; the spirit has, like the raven, abandoned the ark, to feed upon foulness and pollution. What would not that man give to have washed from his remembrance the past good, the present evil?

I have always considered "The Pleasures of Memory" to be the most complete misnomer of the beautiful and very feeling poem which is so entitled. All the images which the poet crowds together on revisiting the place of his birth, are surely any thing rather than of pleasure :

" Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,
Some little friendship formed, and cherished
here !"

And is the blight of early friendships to be classed among the *pleasures* of our mind ? Is the recollection of the gush of full and fond abandonment with which one young heart meets another, now checked and dried up for ever ; is the demolition of that fabric of affection, which we thought founded on a rock, but which the waves of time and of worldliness, proved to be on shifting sand ; are these things *pleasures* ?

How does the poet try to shew the justice of his title; how does he attempt to prove that "Memory" is indeed "blessed," that she is in truth an "ethereal power?" He revisits the house in which he was born. He finds the "court grass-grown," the "gateway mouldering," the mansion desolate! The hall, the scene of merry-hearted revelry, and of all those offices of hospitality and kindness, which are common to an English manor-house, is

"Now stained with dew, with cobwebs darkly hung."

Every thing throughout the house, which speaks to remembrance and affection, is sinking into decay; the garden is a desert, the very clock has ceased to count the hours now growing so sad, so saddening. All the loved friends, who peopled this loved scene, have passed away, like its prosperous days,

—a' s minute, silence, ruin. And we are
 not that these things are pleasures, that we
 are to use the faculty by which we are
 enabled to enjoy them!

I have been particularly led into this train
 of thought by a circumstance which occur-
 ed to me a few days ago. Looking over
 the contents of an old chest, I lighted upon
 some of my school-books, which had lain
 there neglected, probably almost ever since
 I left school. They were covered with all
 the marks and fingerings which such books
 usually display: nondescript figures, dates,
 and scraps of Latin—

“Hic liber est meus,
 Testis est Deus;
 Quis eum furatur
 Per oculum pendatur;”—

After similar effusions of traditional

school-will. It is a *Præceptor*. "I found in the margin my initials and these words: 'Last lesson, July 1st.' This had been written as the date showed me, just as I was about to go home for the *vacation* *vacation*. After the first half-year I had been at school. A crowd of the *recollections* of that time rose upon me,—but I was to have them brought before me more *recent* *recent* still. In turning over the leaves of the book, I found a folded paper which when I opened it, proved to be a letter from my mother wrapped up in the text of my *lesson* or as we used to call it at school, "the full copy." The paper and the ink were both discoloured by time, but the writing was perfectly legible. The letter had been written about a fortnight before the beginning of the holidays, and was full of anticipations of pleasure on my return home.

—all is solitude, silence, ruin. And we are told that these things are pleasures, that we are to bless the faculty by which we are enabled to *enjoy* them !

I have been particularly led into this train of thought by a circumstance which occurred to me a few days ago. Looking over the contents of an old chest, I lighted upon some of my school-books, which had *lain* there neglected, probably almost ever since I left school. They were covered with all the marks and fingerings which such books usually display ; nondescript figures, dates, and scraps of Latin—

“ Hic liber est meus,
Testis est Deus ;
Quis eum furatur
Per collum pendatur ;” —

and other similar effusions of traditionary

And-wit. In a Phœbus, I found at the
begin my initials and these words:—“Last
moon, July 14th.” This had been written
the date shewed me, just as I was about
to go home for the midsummer holidays.
After the first half-year I had been at school.
A crowd of the impressions of that time
rose upon me;—but I was to have them
brought before me much more vividly still.
In turning over the leaves of the book, I
found a folded paper, which, when I opened
it, proved to be a letter from my mother,
wrapped up in the draft of my answer, or,
as we used to call it at school, “the foul
copy.” The paper and the ink were both
discoloured by time, but the writing was
perfectly legible. The letter had been writ-
ten about a fortnight before the beginning
of the holidays, and was full of anti-
cipations of pleasure on my return home

[illegible]

on "going home," during their school-day time—still more their first going home—and still more yet, those who remember their mother's feelings then, may well figure to themselves these two letters.

My young heart was thus, as it were, laid bare before me. When we look back through the mist of years, our view of what really was, is but very faint and imperfect. But here, every feeling was shewn to me in all the freshness of contemporary time—in all the reality of its actual expression.

My throat felt tightened and choked, till a gush of irrepressible tears relieved me. And what tears were those! I hope my worst enemy may never be cursed by shedding such. I looked upon the record of my childish thoughts; how buoyant was their spirit! how sinless were their anticipations! They were breathed, too, to a mother for


after my first absence from it; and chalked out many plans of amusement for me on my arrival. It gave me tidings of my sisters, of my garden, of my pigeons, of my poney, of the favourite groom;—and was written in a large clear hand, that I might read it more readily than the fine, sloping, dashing, writing of a lady would have permitted to so young a child. I turned to my answer. It was written on lines, which had all the appearance of being ruled by myself, as they were far less horizontal than oblique; and the hand was that of a boy of nine years old, when he has not the writing-master at his shoulder. I managed, however, to decypher it. It was on the same topics as my mother's, and written evidently under that intoxication of spirits, in which a school-boy always is for about a month before the holidays. Those who recollect their feelings

On "young men" during the course of
time—will have that the young men—will
all have the same old tendency to
"rush" things that they will have to
themselves these two years.

My young heart was glad as I went,
And sang before me. Vain we soon were
through the mist of youth, and then of youth
that was a day, and then of youth
But now every feeling was as if it
all the fragrance of childhood—
all the beauty of the young.

My first few impressions and studies
of a group of representative young Americans were
and their names were those I hope my
work may never be covered by shadow-
ing men. I looked upon the record of my
childhood thoughts: how business was their
spirit: how serious were their anticipations
They were interested, too, to a marked degree

whom my love was something more than filial. To all the deep and holy feelings of that affection, was added one of fond fellowship, which the gay and cordial kindness of my mother's manners towards her children inspired. That mother, alas ! I lost not long after the time of which I speak ; and this I look upon to be one of the heaviest misfortunes which can befall any man. For, if there be any thing which can restrain the ebullitions of hot youth, which can keep the steps of a wayward and impetuous mind in the straight path, it is the influence of a mother. I do not speak of that direct guidance, which, especially in these days, it is almost impossible should exist ; but if the mother be a woman of the heart and mind which mine was, the smallest spark of good feeling in the son will actuate and restrain him. Nothing can more strongly



propel towards good, nothing can be a more powerful inducement to eschew evil, than the reflection that, by the course which we shall follow, we shall give either gladness, or sorrow and deep shame to our mother's heart.—Oh, God ! how bitterly did the contrast between that time and this strike upon what is left to me of a heart, as I looked upon those memorials of my youthful self ! I was then happy in all the bright-heartedness of sunny infancy ; innocent in all the purity of that passionless age ; and now !——

If the waters of oblivion had been offered to me at that moment, I would have drained the cup to its last drop, even though, as in the Eastern story, Death had been mingled in the draught !

EXTRACT XVI.

“ On n’entend rien à vos femmes de Paris ! ”

Jour.

[From the Diary.]

London, December, 1795.

I WAS turning the corner, the other day, from Conduit-street into Swallow-street, when I ran against a person, not particularly well-dressed, whose face, when I turned to apologize, I was confident I had seen before, and yet to which I could not, at once, assign an owner. He knew me, however, more readily; for, with a sudden exclamation of “ Comment, M. Blount? c’est vous ! ” he gave me a hearty English shake with both hands, which manifestly would have been a

French accolade, had not the difference of the *locale* impressed upon my friend the recollection of our insular customs. With some effort I now recalled to my memory a certain Baron de Corvillac, whom I knew at Paris five or six years ago, and whose wife gave the pleasantest 'petits soupers,' even in that scene and age of that most agreeable species of society. I easily guessed that the Baron was an emigrant; and, from his decayed appearance, surmised that he was as circumscribed in his means as so many of his countrymen who have taken the same step. His gaiety and vivacity, however, had by no means forsaken him. He seemed as lively and buoyant as he used to be when he inhabited one of the finest hotels in Paris, and when he had every thing at his beck which wealth and fashion could command. I found that he had saved absolutely nothing out of

the wreck of the Revolution ;—nay that, on the contrary, he had had great difficulty in escaping with his life. He now, he told me, gained his bread as a teacher of French—in which pursuit he met with two impediments: the first was his extremely slender proficiency in every language *but* French; the second, the market being extravagantly overstocked, by the number of his countrymen in precisely the same position. I inquired after Madame la Baronne. He said she was quite well, and would be most happy to see me any day I could make it convenient to call at No. — Carnaby-street, Golden-square. I promised to do so shortly; and, shaking hands again, we parted.

I cannot say that, as a genus, I admire the emigrants; because I never could discover upon what political principle they

grounded and justified their leaving their country as they did. Whatever their opinions might be, whether royalist or revolutionary, it has always appeared to me that in either case they were peremptorily called upon to remain, at the very moment that they came away. I have, therefore, never been able to account for a step so general as the Emigration undoubtedly was, except upon that principle of self-love, which certainly was the predominant characteristic of French society when I knew it in the last days of the old *regime*. But, whatever may be my general impressions on this subject, I trust I never have been very rigid in applying them to any individual cases, I have met with, of former acquaintances in exile and difficulty; still less was I inclined to do so in the case of the Baron, of whose hospitality and extreme

good nature I retained so strong a recollection. I went yesterday, accordingly, to call upon him and his wife.

I remember Madame de Corvillac one of the most brilliant women in Paris. Her house was the rendezvous of every thing that was most agreeable and eminent in every line of distinction; and the evenings I passed there are among the best of my recollections of my travels. I was thrown into a society which, probably, I could have met nowhere else. Ministers of state, ambassadors, men of letters, men of wit and of the world, distinguished for their conversational talents—all congregated at her suppers; and, dissipated as I then was, I was still well able to appreciate and enjoy the advantages of such society. For Madame de Corvillac herself, she was like many other Frenchwomen of her rank and date—lively, animated, agree-

able,—with a mind cultivated by intellectual intercourse, and polished by constant mingling with the best company in Europe. She had wit enough to call forth the wit of those who had more than herself, and acquirement enough to taste whatever might arise in consequence. For the rest, she was rather handsome, and exceedingly well-dressed; and there was always some one who, in the easy and unquestioned intercourse then prevalent in Paris, had the reputation of being well with her, though without scandal, or any breach of the *bien-séances*.

I had some speculation with myself as to how a person coming from the very hot-bed of so factitious a state of society, would appear in a mean lodging in a back street in London. I figured her to myself, by turns, as grown peevish and slatternly,—or *dévoté*,—or sickly and sinking under adversity; but

it early and all of my supposition
the truth was, certainly, that
which would have occurred.

It was at the door of a house
with the meanness of its

and for M. de Corvillac, I was
but to Madame I was

my card, lest she should
me and I should have the
making myself known. On

at last I ascended a narrow
and somewhat dirty, staircase, to a

which I expected to find in
with the approach to it. But, as

The room into which I was
certainly, not very much crowded

with furniture; but what there was was
of its kind, and scrupulously clean. A

fire shone in the grate; and, above
the extent of habitation, and habitation

1, were numerous and pleasing. I now whether this word would be understood; but it would be difficult to explain all that I mean to convey in this term. Books, music, and other evidences of elegant accomplishment, are included in the expression;—but, to fill up the picture, the items are so many, so indefinite, and so indescribable, that I feel it necessary to convey them by some generic name; and none better than the above occurs to me at this moment.

These observations were not all made at the first *coup-d'œil*, for the living figures in the scene naturally attracted my first attention. Madame de Corvillac herself was seated at a small table, drawing—or, at least, with the implements of drawing before her, which she had only just laid down. She was dressed, simply and becomingly, in the Eng-

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the situation. I thought, perhaps it was
the same as the one I had seen in the
Parisian - "pauvre-maison." He had
been off about eleven years ago, and now
in the same work. Madame de C. was a
very good woman with all her former grace and
her former beauty, and she was
the reason for the change of our
position. and still more, of her for me.
Her English friends had remembered a
very young woman of fashion in the paper
of the day.

A few minutes placed us on a long
perfect car and ourselves. With all the
variety of her sex and her own a
part in the whole history of their
and of their adventures, since, in fact,
it appeared that while the Baron was
at home he
and delicate to
and her

the name

by which, very many

do not know whether

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med, assisted by her daughter,
 ual offices of their little *ménage*—
 the education of that daughter—
 r quota to their moderate means by
 ise of her talents in drawing, which
 mateur had been reckoned extreme,
 rich really were very pleasing—and,
 nally, after a day thus spent, went out
 evening to give lessons in music!

r was this at all recited to me for *effect*,
 raise. It came out in the course of con-
 ation, and as the conclusion to her little
 y of adventure. Nay, she seemed to
 ank she was scarcely to be pitied, in com-
 arison with some of her friends, who, as she
 aid, "could not get employment if they
 were equal to it, and whose health and
 strength would not permit them to avail
 themselves of to offer."

in the midst of

quiet and splendour—and surrounded by a circle the most brilliant which it is possible to meet gathered together, ornamented by dress and blazing with jewels, and yet (though Heaven knows I am no sentimentalist) I never thought she looked so well as she did yesterday, in her simple dress and humble dwelling, with the flush of honest feeling upon her face, as she warmed in the recital of the misfortunes of her compatriots and of herself. Here was a woman upon whom the air had never been suffered to blow rudely, whose sole occupation had been to invent fresh sources of amusement and gratification, and who had literally been clothed in the softest, and had fared of the richest, which art, industry, and wealth could furnish—here was this woman in privation, if not poverty, working with her own hands in those labours, which formerly she starved.

ly knew existed, and dedicating the embellishments of her past life to lessening the present wants of her family and of herself.

I will confess that one of the things which surprised me the most in all this, was the evidently strong motive of action which arose from affection towards her husband. Not only she did all this, but she did it with a cheerfulness which was beautiful, both in itself, and in throwing the severity of her tasks into shade ;—and, moreover, she spoke of him, and of his conduct since they had fallen into evil fortune, with a warmth and energy which at once bespoke the truth and the intensity of the feelings from which those expressions sprang. There never had been, it is true, any thing publicly improper in her conduct ; but neither had she and the Baron been apparently one whit more

attached to each other than was the general usage of the society around them—I need not say how little that was. Nay, more; Madame de Corvillac was very much belied if she did not take still further advantage of the lax arrangements of the times in which she lived. Of this I had personally no accurate knowledge; but such was certainly, true or false, the current rumour in Paris. This apparent contradiction, if not quite solved, was, at any rate, in some degree, explained, by the recollection which occurred to me, as she finished speaking, of the similar surprise which Babouc feels at a lady of Persepolis, with whose *cavalier servente* he was acquainted, pleading her husband's cause with the minister most warmly. “‘ Est-il possible, madame,’ lui dit-il, ‘ que vous vous soyez donné tant de peine pour un homme que vous n’aimez point, et

dont vous avez tout à craindre ?—‘ Un homme que je n’aime point ?’ s’écrie-t-elle : ‘ sachez que mon mari est le meilleur ami que j’aie au monde, qu’il n’y a rien que je ne lui sacrifie, hors mon amant ; et qu’il ferait tout pour moi, hors quitter sa maîtresse.’”* The substance of this passage occurred to my mind yesterday ; and, on turning to my Voltaire, I find I remembered it correctly.

There is no disputing such authority, certainly ; but I cannot but think that, in this case, and in the many similar ones which I believe the revolution has called forth, there has mingled a far nobler, as well as stronger, motive of action, with the factitious and paradoxical sentiment above related. Such a sentiment, indeed, could exist only in a most artificial state of society,

* *Le Monde comme il va ; Vision de Babouc.*

which is a corroboration of the justice of my thinking that it has been common misfortune—the being thrown, together and at once, upon their own natural resources—which has called forth so many noble and self-sacrificing traits, from those whom we were accustomed to consider the most frivolous of human beings. Nay, more ; they have shewn, as in the present instance, a self-devotion to *long endurance*, far, far more trying than the extremest sacrifice, or act, which would need only one moment of heroism to endure or to perform. Madame de Corvillac's living in a garret in London, and working mentally and bodily for the support of her husband and child, appears to me to be almost as unexpectedly noble as even Madame Du-Barri's sacrificing her own life to save that of her

friend, during the reign of Terror.* Yet it is difficult to say; for the actual sacrifice of life, where the choice is in our own power, is undoubtedly one of the greatest and noblest efforts of poor humanity.

Madame de Corvillac still retains those charms of conversation for which she was always remarkable. Nay, they appeared to me to be even increased—partly, it is probable, from the higher interest and importance of the subjects on which she spoke, familiarly, and as one who had borne a part in them, to what could appertain to the customary trifling occupations of idle people

* It is said that when Madame Du-Barri was confined, previously to her execution, the means of assured escape were offered to her. Her friend, Madame de Mortemart, was in the same circumstances as herself. Madame Du-Barri asked if the plan could be made to include two. She was told it was impossible. On this, she irrevocably insisted on being left to her fate; while her friend escaped in her room, and arrived safely in England.

of quality in a luxurious capital. Her character and mind seemed altogether exalted and ennobled by the adversity she had suffered, and the manner in which she had struggled against it. She spoke jestingly of the contrast between their present and their former condition. Secure of the undeniable height of her former state, she seemed to feel no false shame for their present penury—brought on, as it had been, by being included in a general calamity, arising from a great national convulsion; not by their own extravagance or bad conduct.

I looked at the drawing which lay before her, and of which she was making a copy. It represented a French château, surrounded by a garden, full of the terraces, statues, and parterres, usual in the old school of gardening in that country. The prospect,

however, was varied and improved by a distant view of a rich valley, with beautiful hills beyond it, and a fine stream running through its whole length. "Ah!" she said with a sigh, "that is a view of Vombières! I don't know whether you were ever there, M. Blount; but always in the beginning of September, our whole set used to be *réuni* there; and commonly passed a few weeks with us before we went back to Paris. 'Mais ces jours de fête sont passés!' I shall never see dear dear Vombières again. I only hope my poor pensioners may have kind masters."

The tears gathered in her eyes as she spoke,—for the first time during the whole recital she had made to me of her sufferings and hardships. "There is Adelaide," she continued, pointing to her daughter, "who regrets Vombières, and all the *bons paysans*

round it, even more than I do. Young persons, M. Blount, do not become attached to the pleasures and the society of the capital so much as we do. They delight in the simplicity of the country and of country life. It is hard to tear young affections from even inanimate objects. There was a flower-garden, with a fountain, and an arbour of early lilacs, which had always been appropriated to Adelaide; and I do think it cost her almost as much to leave that, as all the rest of France put together. Little Babet, too, her foster-sister—who lent her *sabots* for our disguise in our escape—I almost thought we must have brought the girl with us, it was so difficult to part them. But it was impossible.” I looked towards her daughter, as Madame de C. spoke. I could not, however, see her face; for she held it bent over her work. But I perceived a large tear fall

upon her hand, and I turned away my eyes for fear of jarring feelings which I could not but respect and admire.

I came away from my visit, deeply touched both with sympathy and admiration. It was a noble and a moving spectacle to witness these delicate and luxurious persons meeting their hard fate with so much firmness and energy of mind. I had heard, that such things existed in this country, among others similarly situated; but they had never chanced to fall so immediately under my own observation before. What I have seen has contributed to raise both the individuals, and the class to which they belong, higher in my estimation than they ever stood during the season of their brilliancy, wealth, and splendour. The rubs of hard fortune have given to view the latent merits of which the capability was in them.

EXTRACT XVII.

" Yet, it was love ! ~~unchangeable—unchanged—~~

• • • • •

Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,

And yet—Oh, more than all !—untired by time !"

BYRON.

[From *Antonia* ; translated from the Italian.]

Pisa, November, 1796.

It is with emotions of no ordinary kind that I take up my pen to address you once more. I had thought that all communication had ceased between us for ever ; but circumstances of a nature, indeed, impossible to be foreseen, induce me, even at this distance of time, to renew it. ' Distance of time ?'—Alas, there is no such thing as time to a sentiment

like that which has bound me to you through life !

' You will certainly have heard, and no doubt with interest, of the political convulsions which have recently agitated our country. The irruption of the French has put an end to our existing government, and introduced vast changes with the new dynasty. Among these is the dissolution of a great majority of the religious houses ; and thus, after so many years, I am once more free ! An attempt was, at first, made to impress upon us, individually, the binding nature of our vows ; but the increasing difficulties of re-uniting our communities, even by stealth, have, at last, procured for those who choose to demand it, a formal release from their vows, to ease the consciences of such as were thrown upon the world, but still considered themselves to be sworn to seclusion.

I have claimed, and received this dispensation. I never, from the first, felt my mind and heart go along with my profession; and certain recollections, which, perhaps, have increased of late years, kept me in a state of continual internal contention, equally harassing and hopeless. To taste of peace in the state to which I was doomed, needed a calmer heart, and less agitated passions than I had been able to bring with me to my convent walls. I embraced, therefore, gladly this most unexpected opportunity of being freed from the ties of conscience which bound me: they bind me no longer. On the first dissolution of our community, I sought the protection of an aunt who resides in this place; and with her I still am.

Having said thus much, to explain to you the change which has taken place in my situation, I will now proceed to those topics

which, in truth, are my chief motive in writing to you. Once the bars which rendered our intercourse sinful are removed, I am naturally eager to ask of your happiness and well-being; and to be the first to give you the foregoing information concerning myself. But I will go farther; and that with a frankness which may be at variance with female forms and habits; but I have been too long secluded from the world to have much knowledge or care of the minutiae of its ceremonials; and to *you*, it would be doing both of us injustice, not to speak with the most implicit openness. I am no longer the young girl I was when we first met; when maidenly diffidence drives from the lips the expressions which maidenly love sends thither. Several years—years of loneliness and meditation—have passed over my head since then; and it would be only affectation to pretend, that

my ideas have now exactly the same colouring as they had at that time.


I desire, Philip, that we should meet once more. The letter I received from you when you were here, has been the food on which my heart has lived ever since; and, perhaps, from the unity and exclusiveness of this object of feeling, I may have been led too much to overlook the lapse of time which has taken place since that letter was written. You may have formed ties in your own country, to which your position in society would naturally lead; which I was on the point of entreating you to do, when I wrote to you what I considered my last farewell: but my pen refused to trace upon paper that which, after all, I could not bring my too womanly heart to wish; but which is not the less likely to have been realized, notwithstanding. In that case, I have only to request, that you

will tell me so as speedily as possible. Do not be afraid of hurting my feelings by so doing ; for, separated as we were, I am not so extravagant as to suppose, you would consider yourself for ever bound to me. No ! I shall not upbraid you, even in thought ;—but I shall then deem it prudent, that we should not meet. On every account, it would be impossible.

If you still are free, I will come to set up the staff of my rest in England. But, mark me, and believe me,—I do not purpose, by so doing, even to recall to your remembrance the tenour of your last letter to me. I feel confident you consider me above dissimulation : if I thought that you would view my conduct in this light, it would prevent our ever meeting at all. But, I am convinced, you are too generous to do so. My wish is to enjoy the society of the only human being

heart, and active feelings. For myself, I shall not attempt to describe the joy with which it has flooded my whole soul. It may be comprised in three words—I am still free from any ties which can oppose our union. Come, beloved of my youth—come, my wife!—for such, from hence, you are! Yes, dearest,—the sufferings of years will now be repaid, they will henceforth be only the gloomy days to which we shall look back, as to a contrast to the brightness of our present fate! The dreams of our early days will be realized now. On my bosom, you will find repose after the agitations of the life which has passed; on your's, I shall find solace, and purity, and peace, after the storms of my tempestuous youth.

Antonia, I will not deceive you; whatever have been my wrongs towards you, deceit never was among them; and it shall not be so



now. I always spoke the truth to you, in former days; perhaps sometimes to the detriment of my suit with you—I will not now cease to do so. Years have passed since we parted; and I do not pretend that, during those years, I have not sometimes spoken to women in the language of love. Man is a being of attributes and faculties so much less delicately cast than those of woman, that that which, in her, would be final—aye, and degrading—dereliction; in him is only a passing cloud, an effaceable stain, which the remembrance of her he really loves can carry off, and obliterate. That which it would cut me to the heart's core to think that you had done, I confess frankly that I have done myself. I have allowed the fantasy of the moment to lead me to others; but you, Antonia, you have always been seated at the bottom of my heart. In the wildest moments of dissipa-

tion, in the most intoxicating spells of woman's witchery, your image has risen before me, and shot a pang across my heart for its alienation.

To you, who are the most delicate of created beings, I almost shrink from thus exposing the weaknesses and foul places of my heart. But I am determined that you shall know me as I am, and not merely through the coloured medium which youthful affection has held before your eyes when turned towards me. I never will throw false glosses over my feelings—if I had meant or endeavoured to do so, I should have been wholly silent on the subjects of which I have just spoken. But I have confessed my fickleness—I must now assert my truth. Antonia, you are the only woman I ever truly loved;—throughout all my faults, I ever have loved
love you still, with all the fer-

vency of my youthful passion—with all the accumulated strength and intensity of years ! I feel that it was from you my life was destined to take its colour—that my love for you was fated to be *the* passion of my existence ; I feel that my hopes of future happiness are inseparably interwoven with your's.

Such, if a window were in my breast, you would see was the state of my heart concerning you. I have fairly set all before you—if to this you can entrust your future destiny, my arms and my affections are open to welcome and to foster you—my home awaits to greet you as my bride. With you, indeed, that home, of late so lonely and desolate, in which Regret and Discontent were fast obtaining so firm a footing—that home will be to me a scene of happiness such as I have little deserved to experience—of happiness, the truest, the *only* true on earth—domestic hap-

piness. At length, Antonia, after what seemed to be an immoveable obstacle, you will be mine ! Can it, indeed, be that such fortune is in store for me ?

EXTRACT XVIII.

“ When I said I should die a bachelor, I did not think I should live to be married.”

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Dodderidge, March, 1797.

I HAVE just received a letter, my dear Friend, to inform me that Antonia is actually on her way to this country ; nay, that I may expect her within a fortnight from this time. This relieves me from much anxiety ; for, in despite of the French, I was almost wishing I had gone for her myself ; though, to be sure, it might have exposed us to all manner of delays as well as dangers. She is coming, too, in the most convenient of all possible ways—in a merchant-ship from Leghorn ;—

so that I shall meet her at Portsmouth, or Deal, immediately on her landing; and she will be exposed to no trouble, anxiety, or inconvenience whatever.

I cannot say how deeply I feel touched as well as obliged by Lady Katharine's most friendly offer of receiving Antonia till our marriage can take place. I accept her proffer with all the gratitude which such kindness must call forth. From where, indeed, can I so fitly receive my bride, as from the family of my old, my tried, my excellent friend? You must give her away, Frewin. Besides this, I fully feel the advantage of my poor nun experiencing, at her first coming to this country, the advantage of being under the protection of a person like Lady Katharine. No wonder you are a good husband, when you have such a good wife to make you so.

I am here turning my bachelor-house out

at windows, to make it in some measure fit to bring my wife to. Her boudoir, I do flatter myself, will be a *bijou*; she is, as I believe I have told you, an admirable musician;—and there is the snuggest recess for the piano-forte, which looks as if it was made for it; though, Heaven help me! my revered progenitor, who built the room, probably never knew of the existence of any instrument beyond a drum or a hunting-horn. I have got an excellent harp for her also, which is her favourite instrument;—and the pictures, books, &c. really complete the room, so as to render, I think, the casket almost worthy of the jewel;—I cannot give it a higher praise. A view of a certain scene near Bologna hangs on one side the fire-place, and an empty frame, as a pendant, on the other—destined, when this endless war will let one get to the spot, to receive a still more favourite landscape in

the vicinity of Tours, of which you may, perhaps, have heard. Why do I pester you with these follies of a lover?—why, simply, because I think you will bear with me, while in this intoxication of spirits;—and, whether you will or no, I have my pen in my hand, and have the option of writing, as you have of reading, according to pleasure.

The conflict of old Ward's feelings is very ludicrous! Good old soul! she is delighted at her master marrying, who, she thought, was growing a confirmed old bachelor;—and thus giving some chance of a continuation of the race which she venerates beyond all others;—but she is somewhat scandalized at the reflection that the bride is a foreigner, and, moreover, a *Papish*, as she chuses to call it. She has already interrogated me as to what dishes should be served on a Friday; and seems to have considerable fear for the ghost-

ly weal of every one in the house, if a priest should be ever allowed to come into it. But her joyous feelings, on the whole, predominate: indeed, I will not allow the expression of any others, in my presence, just now.

I have set three additional gardeners to work, to get my mother's old flower-garden into order. The boudoir opens upon it;—and I am determined that, in her first English summer, Antonia shall find no lack of roses, even so far north of the Alps. I have lived here so little lately, that I have an infinity to do; but I have worked in every sense *con amore*, and have pretty nearly got to the end of my task. I shall be in town next week, when I shall come and thank Lady Katharine in person: till then, good bye.

P. B.

[From the Diary.]

Dodderidge, March, 1797.

I CAN scarcely think it real, after all, that I am making ready for my marriage, and that marriage with Antonia! 'Faith I did not deserve to be thus rescued from the slough of Despond, into which my old regrets on that score were so fast sinking me. I ought to have married her eight years ago. How much better it would have been for both of us, if I had! She would have brought an unbroken and undoubting spirit to our common stock:—and I a heart with so much less of the corruption of the world to spoil it. And why did I not marry her? That question seems to be more and more inexplicable, every time I put it to myself;—and that, I think, on a moderate computation, has been three times a-day for almost the last five

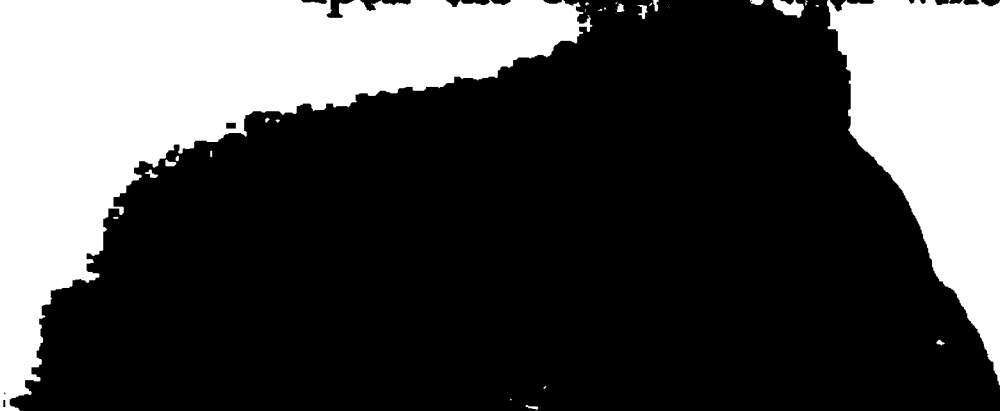
years. There was nothing to hinder me—I had only to speak the word ;—but truly, the young gentleman valued “ his liberty,” and would not. The consequence of which has been almost breaking her heart, and completely wasting and deteriorating my own. Still, with regard to her, it is not effete,—when I think of her it burns “ with all its wonted fires ;”—and the ‘ knoll over the Loire’ rises to my mind, just as it was of yore.

She is changed, I doubt not ;—but for that I do not care a button. The bloom of her beauty may be gone : but its grace and charm must remain with her for ever ; and these are more than ample. We are yet young, both of us : we have, in all human likelihood, many years before us : after the storms of our youth, they will be years of happiness and peace.

Yes ! Antonia shall taste the delights of

an English home. She shall see that there is nothing on this globe to compare with it. I have been much abroad; and I liked the Continent, as a young and gay man, exceedingly: but, for the affections and charities of domestic life, there is no place I have yet seen like an English fire-side. The roughness of our fathers' days is past, and our country-houses are no longer reproachable with mere boorishness and debauchery. But with one so mild, so cultivated, so amiable, as Antonia,—one whose delicacies and elegancies of mind are equal to the strength and warmth of her affections, my home will indeed be blessed! I scarcely deserve such happiness as this; but it would truly be my own fault, if I did any thing to forfeit it, when once it is in my possession.

I almost smile at myself when I reflect upon the eagerness with which I look for-



ward to our being settled here together. After all the wildnesses of my youth, I shall become a more uxorious husband at last. I shall belie even the modified definition of a boudoir—"Un appartement charmant, où l'on va pour être seule, mais où l'on ne boude point."—No ! here shall I hang enraptured on the tones of that voice which first struck upon my heart ; here shall we gaze together upon the resemblance of her Italian home, and (soon I hope) upon that of the spot where we first confessed to one another our affection. Here, too, I shall instruct her in my language ; and make her taste the strength and richness of our old poets, as she used to delight in setting before me the grace, and delicacy, and harmony of those of her own country. Oh ! what a summer of happiness this will be ! How far—how immeasurably superior to the loose and dis-

sipated life I have led for so many years. Ah ! I wish I could sponge them from the calendar ! But it is no use looking back thus : I can look forward with joy and hope—which is more than I have been able to do for many a long day ; so I ought to be content with that.

EXTRACT XIX.

“ ————— A brave vessel

Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart ! Poor souls ! they perish'd.
THE TEMPEST.

[Letter from Mr. Frewin to Lady Katharine
Frewin.]

Hastings, March, 1797.

MY DEAR KATHARINE,—

THE rumour was, alas ! but too true ! The ship is totally lost, and every soul on board has perished, with the exception of one sailor and an Italian lad, a passenger ! When I arrived here, the day before yesterday, I found Blount in a state little short of

distraction; for the identity of the vessel had not then been ascertained; and uncertainty was, therefore, added to his racking agitation. The moment I arrived, we set off together to the place where the fragments of the wreck were being cast upon the beach; for the ship had already entirely gone to pieces, and it was now only in planks and in small morsels that it reached the shore.

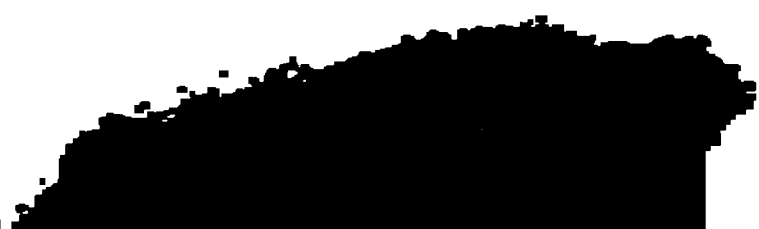
Shortly after we got to the spot, the tide turned; and the things thrown up by the sea became less and less frequent. We therefore returned to the town, to inquire if any certain tidings had yet been received. We found that a man belonging to the wrecked vessel, and a boy who had been servant to a passenger, had come safe to land. It was, indeed, the vessel on board which the unfortunate Antonia was coming to England.

She, as well as every other soul on board, with the above exceptions, had perished !

The effect of this intelligence upon Blount was such as I should in vain attempt to describe to you ; and which I would not distress you by doing if I could. I am rejoiced that I came down at the moment I did ; for I do not know to what extremities his frantic sorrow would have driven him, had I not been here to keep him under some controul. It was with the greatest difficulty that we withheld him from rushing to the shore to seek Antonia's body. By ' we,' I mean myself and Eustache, his servant, who has lived with him for upwards of ten years. The feeling and delicate behaviour of this man has, I had almost said, endeared him to me for life. Certainly I shall always esteem him most highly.

At last, the violence of Blount's feelings

had their natural result. He fell into a heavy sleep, or rather a kind of torpor, from sheer exhaustion. I left him under the charge of Eustache, and went out to question the people who had been saved. The sailor gave me a distinct account of the loss of the vessel. It appeared she had encountered the dreadful gale of the 21st, when considerably farther down channel; and, after every species of suffering and disaster, had finally been driven on shore, near to the spot whither I had already been. She struck so strongly, and the force of the sea was so great, that she went to pieces in ten minutes after she took the ground. It was on a sand-bank, at only about three quarters of a mile from the shore; but the sea was so tremendous that no swimmer could make head against it, and the tide was ebbing!—Another cause of the great loss of life in this



unhappy vessel was, that the only boat they had left was swamped, and stove in pieces, full of people, against the ship's side—partly from the violence of the sea, and partly from the eagerness of the crew to rush into her. Every soul who was in this boat perished, with the exception of the Italian lad whom I have mentioned, who contrived to get upon a hen-coop which was floating from the wreck; and after remaining in the water for nearly two hours, he was picked up by the life-boat, which was at last able to venture forth to the assistance—not of the vessel, for of that no vestige remained, but—of such as, like this boy and the man, who had seized a spar, might still be floating on the surface.

The Italian was able to give me some information concerning the person who mainly excited my interest. Antonia, he told me,

was in the boat, and he was close to her at the moment it was swamped. There could be, alas ! no doubt of her identity. The name and description tallied too accurately to leave any hope of this kind. But if any had existed, it would have been removed by the body being washed on shore yesterday afternoon, about a mile and a-half from the place where the ship went down. On the news being brought to me, I immediately sent ~~Hustache~~, who had seen Antonia abroad some years ago, to identify the body ; and, if it really was that which we sought, to have it brought hither at once. He returned in a couple of hours with the corpse !

I went to look upon all that remained of one concerning whom I had so long taken interest, from the manner in which she had been able to engross the mind of such a man as Blount. The body was but slightly disfi-

gured by the sea-water, and, as I gazed upon it, I could easily trace that beauty of which B. had so often spoken in rapture. She had evidently undergone care and sorrow; and her skin was now, of course, deadly pale—but the form of the features was exquisite; and the hair which fell around her face was of a beauty most remarkable. One sleeve of her dress had been torn, and was now raised high up the arm. I thought I perceived, just above it, something glitter like gold; and, on raising the sleeve more completely, I perceived an oval golden locket, fastened to her arm, between the shoulder and the elbow, by a chain riveted round it. After considerable difficulty in finding the spring, I at last opened it, and found it to contain a small miniature of Blount, beautifully executed, taken when he must have been about three-and-twenty, and set

in a slender braid of hair and diamonds. I conclude this must have been given to her by him at the first period of their acquaintance, and that she wore it thus concealed, and covered with a plate of gold, either that it might be unknown in the convent—or that, if it were discovered, she might assign to it contents of some different nature.

Towards the close of the evening, I informed Blount that the body had been found; for I saw that his agitation concerning its fate was so extreme, that he never would have attained any calm till the worst was encountered and over. He insisted upon seeing her;—I endeavoured, as strenuously as I could, to dissuade him from it, but I found it impossible to do so.

I shall not shock your feelings by attempting to depict his emotions at the sight. You can, indeed, readily figure to your-



self what they must have been. Here was the beloved of his youth, whom he had been awaiting as his bride, after so many years of hopeless separation, now restored to him at last—a corpse! He discovered the picture as I had done—he determined that it should not be separated from her.

I had been in hopes, when I yielded to his seeing the body, that it might draw tears from him; for, as yet, he had shed none. But no, he gazed upon her, almost as if he was unconscious upon what he looked—his eyes were fixed in despair! I was about to remove him gently from the room, when he sprang from me, and, throwing himself upon his knees by the bed-side, impressed a long kiss upon the clay-cold lips of the corpse. A shudder seemed to thrill through his whole frame; and, on rising, he would have fallen backwards his full

length upon the floor, if I had not caught him in my arms and prevented it. He had fainted.

I had him removed to his own room ; and this morning he is somewhat restored ; but he still insists upon attending the funeral, which is to take place this evening at a Catholic chapel about two miles off. He is very unfit to do so, but I fear I shall not be able to prevent him. Adieu ! You shall hear from me again to-morrow.

[From the same to the same.]

THE unhappy Antonia has been laid in her last home ; and I shall now endeavour to get my friend away from this place as soon as possible. He insisted, as I had anticipated, on attending the burial ; and I was ultimately glad he did so, when the earth

was about to close over her grave for ever, he threw himself upon my shoulder, and wept long and unrestrainedly. You may suppose how gladly I welcomed those tears.

My own eyes, I assure you, were not dry. It was indeed a spectacle which could not fail to draw tears from any one who had human feeling. Poor Eustache sobbed aloud. It was solemn, also, in a high degree. It took place by torch-light; and the red and gloomy light which the torches shed, spread a veil over the meannesses of the humble chapel, and made it appear in unison with the sad scene. When I reflected on the purpose for which this lovely and ill-fated woman had come to England—on the very different ceremony which I had expected to witness in a similar church,—I could not but silently return my grateful thanks to Heaven
‘tune had been so different—that

you, Katharine, and our little ones were spared to me, to shed such pure and perfect happiness over my domestic home:—Poor Blount ! he can never know that happiness, now !

NOTE, BY THE EDITOR.

THE reader will find an interval of nearly three years between the last and the next Extract. I have, therefore, thought it advisable to insert a brief note in this place, to connect what has passed with that which is to come.

Shortly after the catastrophe recorded in Mr. Frewin's letter, Mr. Blount retired to his country place, that he might be uncontrolled in the indulgence of those feelings of bitter grief to which so shocking an event could not fail to give rise. He fell, as I have understood, into an almost apathetic state:—his feelings did not find vent in sudden and violent bursts; but rather seemed chilled to numbness—as the effects of extreme cold upon our physical frame shews itself in sleep and torpor

After a time, however,—for such a state cannot, by possibility, last long,—his wounded state of mind began to display itself in extreme restlessness, and total incapacity of applying to the same thing for any continuance. He had not that well-head within, from which all the fountains of real consolation are supplied. His mind—as may be guessed from his life—was not of a religious habit. Thus, when he suffered under an affliction such as this, he had not that store of inestimable price whereunto to have recourse. In the dearth of happiness and peace within his soul, there was for him no widow's cruse, unexhausted, inexhaustible. He felt, to its full extent, the barrenness of that uncultivated land.

When at this stage of a wounded heart, partly from former habit, and partly from its natural workings Mr. Blount would willingly

have sought diversion to his thoughts in travelling. But at this time the greater part of the Continent was shut against us; and the short tours which our own Island can afford were but a pitiful resource to a man who had been accustomed to wander at will over Europe. He did, however, pass through the routine of some of these. In the summer of 1798, he went through the Highlands; in that of the following year, over the Lakes; but, after each of these, he returned to his solitary home more gloomy, depressed, and miserable than ever. The truth is, that, to a man who has lived in the world, when the first passionate ebullition, and the more fearful torpor, of violent grief, have passed away—(and pass they must, either from the sufferer sinking under them, if he be weakly, or struggling through them, if he be strong)—after that stage is over

there is only one quality which can render solitude soothing, or even bearable, and that, I have already stated, Mr. Blount did not possess;—I mean, a strong sense and cultivation of religion. Without this, from the world he came, and to the world he will assuredly revert.

Accordingly, about two years and a-half after Antonia's death, Mr. Blount appeared again in London; but he came there an altered man. The same craving for excitement existed in him; but he no longer sought to gratify it by the same means. There were several circumstances which conduced to this. The first flow and flush of youth were passed. He had arrived at mature manhood, and he was far elder than his years. When he first was separated from this early object of his love, he had all the glow of young blood within his veins,—he had the evil habit of pursuing, and the exciting one of success,

within his mind; and though he regretted her deeply, strongly, bitterly, we have seen the means by which he strove to drive away these feelings. He had now lost her again, and irrevocably. What he suffered on that occasion, itself tended to effect upon him the work of Time; and he was also some years older in point of fact. Besides this, he was, as I have before said, a man of warm and delicate feelings; and it would scarcely have been consistent with either, if he had now recommenced his former course of life.

Still he needed excitement, and he sought it where it is undoubtedly to be found, but at the price of almost every other good in life. In a word, he acquired the habit of *play*. *This*, certainly, yields excitement, but, good Heavens! at what cost!

I shall now recommence my extracts from Mr. Blount's own writings.

EXTRACT XX.

Pleas'd the fresh packs on cloth of green they see,
 And seizing handle with preluding glee;
 They draw, they sit, they shuffle, cut and deal,
 Like friends assembled, but like foes to feel.

CRABBE.

[From the Diary.]

London, Dec. 1782.

I LOST a cruel deal of money, last night,
 at ——'s. Plague take it, this is paying
 dearly for one's whistle, indeed. I must
 take care what I am about—for I should
 never do for a poor man; and I am not
 quite, I hope, the sort of person who would

turn rook, after having lost all his feathers as a pigeon. The transition, indeed, is by no means rare:—

“On commence par être dupe,
On finit par être fripon.”

The history of many a man in this town (I might say, perhaps, with more propriety, *on this town*) is summed up in this distich;—aye, and of men who carry a good face upon it, and are welcome and well received in good society. This, I confess, appears to me to be somewhat an anomaly in our moral code. A woman who lapses from what is considered the point of honour in her sex, is turned, without recall, from out the social pale. A *cordon sanitaire* is drawn round her to prevent the spread of the contagion to the uninfected. But a man who is known to live upon play—“whose car-

riage," as Count Basset has it, "rolls upon the four aces"—whose skill at all games is extreme, and whose luck is, to say the least of it, extraordinary,—such a man, as long as he is not detected in downright (must I use the word?) *cheating*, is rather looked upon as a person of talent and accomplishment to be admired, than as a swindler to be thrown out at the window. But, then, he must play at the best clubs, and fleece the highest, richest, and most fashionable men. Sharpers "in rags" are never to be tolerated. If he be himself a man of good family, so much the better; but, at all events, he must live in a 'good set,' and fly at high game, or he will never get on in this very moral and consistent country. Some century or so ago, younger brothers used to take the air and a purse

upon Hounslow Heath; and their merit then consisted in their boldness towards men, and their good breeding towards women. Now we see many a scion of many a noble house expend their small patrimony in initiation into the profession which they carry on afterwards with so much skill and success. It may almost be looked upon as sinking their capital in a business which will ultimately bring them a large return.

There is Charles S——, now :—who does not know Charles S.?—what ‘man about town’ is not proud to boast of his acquaintance?—what numberless aspirants pretend to his acquaintance, though they have it not! This man is the younger son of a baronet, and began the world with a younger brother’s fortune, of some eight thousand pounds, and a commission in the

Guards. In about two years, he had lost about ten out of his eight thousand pounds, which it cost him his commission, and every thing else he had in the world, to make good. This is six or seven years ago ; and he now lives at the rate of from two to three thousand a year ;

“ Crowns in his purse he has, and goods at home—”

—money in the funds, horses, equipages, and all other *necessaries* of modern luxury. Who can say that, in a pecuniary point of view, his ten thousand pounds were not well laid out ?

Still, calculating the odds appears to me to be somewhat a dreary occupation for a lifetime ; and cutting a nine at Macao but a questionable accomplishment to have acquired during its course. With these men, play is business—it is regarded and followed

as such, and considered only with reference to the hard cash which it produces. They could not seek it as I do—for excitement, for oblivion. They could not invoke the Demon of Gaming to drive out other demons worse even than he. They watch the turn of the last card at Rouge et Noir, and of the die at Hazard, with interest, it is true; but not as I do, with the feverish anxiety I seek to raise, but which they shun with the strongest and minutest care.

And do I gain the 'forgetfulness of other things' which I pay so dearly for? For the moment, perhaps I do; but when I walk home at five or six in the morning, with my eyes sunken, my head aching as if it would split, my spirits jaded, my nerves unstrung from over-excitement, the revulsion is almost as bad as the continuance of my former oppression could have been. And if I am

thing, which as I go on is likely enough,
 I shall have bought this maddening
 excitement at a high price. I have never
 seen or thought about money; perhaps
 it is true that I have always had it—
 a ~~large~~ ^{small} quantity to meet my wants. I
 am not ~~more~~ ^{less} extravagant,
 I ~~am~~ ^{was} living as a bachelor, with
 a ~~large~~ ^{small} ~~amount of~~ ^{amount of} ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~entertainment~~ ^{entertainment}. I could afford
 to do this. But the last few months have
 been so ~~different~~ ^{different} the first time. I have been
~~unable~~ ^{unable} to ~~use~~ ^{use} my resources,
 and ~~am~~ ^{am} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~state~~ ^{state} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~before~~ ^{before}. And yet, what can
 I do? The ~~movements~~ ^{movements} of family life, of a
~~domestic~~ ^{domestic} ~~house~~ ^{house} are ~~debarred~~ ^{debarred} from me. I
~~cannot~~ ^{cannot} ~~move~~ ^{move} like a giant—never moving
 from the same spot: inert, monotonous, and
~~unhappy~~ ^{unhappy}. I have tried it, and it almost
~~killed~~ ^{killed} me. If it had killed me at
 once, I should have thanked it. My mind

and heart are in an unhealthy state, and are not to be satisfied with wholesome food : Drams, mental drams, are needful for me now.

* * * * *

[The following is of a few days' later date.]

TRULY, these places have been aptly named. They are, indeed, *Hells*. The appellation was probably originally given in jest, but it has often been a most melancholy earnest. If being the abode of the passions the most evil of our nature—of those least redeemed by one spark of nobleness or generosity—if lust of gain, if frantic and unhallowed joy, if still more frantic and desperate despair—if the sufferings and yellings of the victims, and the icy imperturbability of the presiding demon—if these can make a place resemble Hell; then have these places been rightly named.

A THOUGHT OF THE NATURE OF A GAMING-HOUSE
 WOULD OFTEN BE SUCH A POWERFUL DOCUMENT,
 THAT IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION, AND
 A PERSONAL OF VARIOUS TO CHASE ABOUT TO CURE
 THE "MISFORTUNE" OF MAY. Its chief fault would
 be the inveterate tendency of its shade: with
 ALL MY "STRENGTH" OF LIGHT TO REMOVE IT, IT WOULD
 BE TOO IMPRESSIVE TO THE MIND. To walk
 THROUGH THE HOUSES OF GAMES, AND OF SELF-
 BROUGHT MISERY, WHICH SUCH A BOOK WOULD
 FURNISH, WOULD BE TOO REVOLTING AND PAINFUL.
 But if one of its frequenters, now and then,
 WERE TO WRITE, FAITHFULLY AND MINUTELY, HIS
 INDIVIDUAL CONFESSIONS, THEY WOULD, I THINK,
 BE THE STRONGEST MORAL LESSON THAT EVER WAS
 READ UPON THE SUBJECT. The play of "The
 Gambler," as Kemble and Mrs. Siddons act
 it, is the most powerful rebuke to this vice
 WHICH NOW EXISTS; BUT STILL IT IS A WORK OF
 FANTASY, AND NEVER CAN POSSESS THE

real effect which a real story furnishes. If man who has lost fortune, fame, self-respect; (and how many are there who answer this description!) by the indulgence of this damnable passion, were to narrate the steps by which, one by one, he was deprived of these the only things which make life worth the living, it would, I am convinced, have a more powerful effect than even the inimitable representation of so tragic a story as that I have mentioned above.

It was only yesterday that I was witness to a scene, though not so awful, perhaps more revolting than the effects of gaming as portrayed in the work I have been alluding to. Whenever there are circumstances of tragic interest and horror, the event in which they mingle acquires, from them alone, a certain character of elevation, which

does not, perhaps, naturally belong to it. When 'Death mingles in the dance,' the awful effect which it always produces upon humanity tends to throw all the coarser and more degrading adjuncts out of view. Thus the weakness and vice of Beverley gain a degree of dignity from the very extent of their ruinous consequences. But what I beheld yesterday was wholly void of these extrinsic aids; and presented, in unrelieved deformity, the humiliating spectacle of a gentleman, and a man of honour, fallen into all the disgrace and crapulosity of base and dishonest practices.

I was at school with Jack Barnard, and have known him, off and on, all my life. We were next boys to each other in the school, and I had consequently the means of knowing him pretty accurately and intimately. He had the reputation (—and he deserved

both branches of it—) of being a very clever, and a very idle, fellow. His idleness, however, usually got the better of his talents; and he was, certainly, not nearly so distinguished, as a scholar, as many who were not, by far, naturally his equals. He grew up a very handsome fellow, also; and he thus had more advantages from the hand of Nature than are commonly given to one individual. He was a younger brother; but he inherited a small estate, which enabled him to follow the vocation of ‘a man about town’—to which he certainly was well fitted, both by the degree and the nature of his talents, as well as by his inaptitude to any continuous application. He was distinguished for conversational and convivial powers; and, in truth, I scarcely remember to have met a man more agreeable in society. His flow of spirits and of bright good-humour

was extreme; and he was, consequently, exceedingly popular, and sought after. Nor was this all. He was an honourable and a generous-minded man; and was as much esteemed for these qualities by those who can appreciate them, as he was for his more brilliant and unsubstantial attributes by the superficial butterflies of the world.

I had not seen him for some time. He had, on my last return to town, disappeared from the scene, and I could hear but little concerning him. The waves of the London world are like those of the physical sea;—they close over any thing that sinks from its surface, and display no trace to tell that it has been there. I gathered, however, that he had been unfortunate at play; and a whisper or two reached me, touching some gambling dispute, which told very ill for him, and



which, knowing him as I had done, I was very loth to give belief to.

A few days ago, however, I received a letter which dissipated at once the friendly doubts to which I had clung. I thought, at the first glance, that the hand-writing had once been familiar to me; but still I was surprised when, on turning to the last page, I saw Barnard's well-known name at the bottom. The letter was dated from the King's Bench prison; and was written in a tone half of shame, half—I can scarcely call it of effrontery, but of that reckless, assumed unconsciousness of any cause for shame existing, which is often one of the shapes in which it shews itself. Every now and then, however, there burst forth a flash of the spirits and brilliancy which had distinguished his better days,—now alas! so much ob-

scured by the dense mists of ruined fortune, and tainted fame. The purport of the letter was, ostensibly to ask me to go to see him in his new dwelling, on which he cut sundry jokes ; but I could see clearly enough, that the only reason he could desire my visit was to borrow money of me ; so (for, with all his errors and vices, he was my old companion and schoolfellow,) I put a few pounds into my pocket yesterday morning, and set off for poor Barnard's " seat in Surrey." I had never been within these celebrated walls before, and I looked forward to my visit with some curiosity. I had never been an inmate of a prison, except in company with Peregrine Pickle, Roderick Random, and Smollett's other heroes—every one of whom, by the way, Humphrey Clinker not excepted, he, at one period or other of their adventures, conducts to gaol. The general cha-

characteristics of the place, on first entering it, are still similar to what might be expected from his descriptions. There is a large open space, bounded on one side by the high brick wall surmounted with a *chevaux-de-frise*, which bespeaks the nature of the place; while on the other rises a line of shabby, squalid-looking buildings, which, at a price, little suited, I should imagine, to the circumstances of the in-dwellers, are doled out, by the square-foot, to those of whose "res angustæ" this is the home. The open space is, it seems, at once the promenade and the gymnasium of the prison; for the wall is partitioned off into four very good racket-grounds, in which several persons were at full play, while others contented themselves with the more moderate exercise of parading up and down near the buildings.

I inquired for Mr. Barnard, and was ac-

cordingly shewn up to his room. Jack had always been a luxurious, expensive fellow in his habits, and had occupied, for several years past, an excellent first-floor lodging in St. James's-street. It was there where I had last seen him; and certainly there was some little difference between his gay drawing-room, and the low, close, dingy hole of about twelve feet square into which I was now ushered. The man who had accompanied me from the lodge to point out my friend's quarters, had been chaunting their praises, as we had threaded passage after passage, and ascended stair after stair. I judged that the man's ideas of splendour and convenience must be in conformity with the samples of those two qualities by which he was surrounded. But, still, I was not quite prepared for their being pitched in so low a key. Yet I might have been pre-

pared too; for, as we passed along a narrow, gloomy corridor, which smelled close, sour, and faint, from the number of thickly-inhabited and ill-ventilated rooms which opened into it, my conductor said to me, "This, sir, is a nice walk for the gentlemen, when it's bad weather, or after nightfall." I might have been prepared for any thing after this.

It was about one o'clock when I was shewn into Barnard's room. He was still at breakfast; the bed was unmade, the air was close and fusty, and the room altogether foul and in disorder. B. raised his head as we entered, and a sudden gleam of joy and gratitude lighted up his sunken and wasted features. He was in his dressing-gown; was unshaved, for three days at least; a shirt of about the same date was improvidently apparent at the breast; his breeches-knees were unfastened; his stockings

were ungartered ; his whole appearance was slovenly and squalid—in one comprehensive word, it befitted his abode. For his breakfast apparatus, there appeared, on a very dirty cloth, a tea-pot with a broken spout, a half-quartern loaf, and a slice of butter resting upon a fragment of some luckless poem, instead of a plate. Added to these, I thought I caught a glimpse, as it was removed at our entrance, of what had sadly the appearance of a brandy bottle ! “ Poor, poor fellow ! ” thought I ; “ and art thou come to this ? ”

Jack received me, at first, with a frank, open, affectionate manner. He had been taken by surprise—he was touched—and Nature, for a few minutes, had her way. But, as he recovered from the first emotion, he thought it necessary to put on that conventional assumption of no-shame, which I have

said appeared in some parts of his letter, and which is at once the surest and the most disagreeable way of shewing the existence of that shame which it so vainly strives to hide.

Heavens ! what a wreck he is become ! That fine, handsome, athletic fellow has shrunk into a stooping, shrivelled, nervous drunkard ; his eye blood-shot, his hand shaking, his breath reeking, his person unclean !—his mind, like his body, appeared to have been infected by the air of the place. He talked in its low language, and seemed imbued with its low ideas. He was become a worthy denizen of the place ; and what had brought him thither ?—Play.

Could this miserable man whom I saw before me, be the gay, the brilliant, Jack Barnard, who had so long glittered in the galaxy of fashion, and ever been distinguished from its minor stars ? Could this

be he, whose society had been courted by men, whose attentions had been always welcome to women?—To women?—Fough!—look at him now!—And what brought him to this?—Play.

As I looked at him, Pierre's exclamation to Jaffier rose in my mind; so strongly, indeed, I had it, at the moment, on my tongue's tip:—

' ——— thou my once-loved valued friend?

——— the man so call'd my friend

Was gen'rous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant,

Noble in mind, and in his person lovely;

.

But thou! a wretched, base, false, worthless,

drunkard, :!

Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;

All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest

thee!"

—But, no! I was compelled to despise poor

Jack, but I could not detest him ; I felt no anger towards him, not a jot ; pity, sorrow, contempt, if you will—but detestation I could not feel.

I found, as I had expected, that to borrow, or rather to beg, money of me was the true cause of Barnard's desiring to see me. He thought, perhaps, (possibly he had judged by experience in other quarters), that I might either take no notice of his letter, or coolly refuse his request, if he had made it by that means ; while, no doubt, he supposed the heart of an old schoolfellow could not resist the horrors of the prison, if once he could get him to come to see them.

He had no need, poor fellow, Heaven knows ! to use any extraneous means to induce me to grant him what assistance I could ; but, even if, like Sterne, “ I had predetermined not to give him a single sou,

it would have been impossible for me to have withstood the plea, true or false, on which he grounded his request. He said he had a new-comer "chummed in upon him"—and he wanted money "to chum him out." On enquiring into the meaning of this jargon, I found that each of these rooms (as they are by courtesy called in the prison) was liable to four inmates!—but that, if the first occupier was rich enough to pay the rest a certain weekly modicum, to keep away, he then might have it to himself; while they hired a share of some hole with half the sum, and lived upon the rest! And this, Barnard told me, was the sole source of subsistence of a very large proportion of the prisoners!

Being here, I naturally wished to see what there was to be seen; and B. undertook to shew me over the prison. Whilst he was

dressing, I went down into the Court, to look a little about me, to say nothing of my anxiety, by this time, to breathe a fresher air. I was more struck with the great *variety* of appearance among the prisoners, than with any other one point about them. Some were dressed far better—that is, far more point device in the fashion—than myself; and were, in every respect, figures which one would expect rather to meet in St. James's-street than within the walls of the Bench. The class next below these were “shabby gentlemen”—they had good clothes and dirty linen, or clothes well cut and of good materials, but woefully shabby and threadbare. All these men seemed to have a dash of what is vulgarly called “the blood” about them; and, indeed, I thought I recognized one or two of their faces, as having seen them at Tattersal's. Others, again, seemed to be driven to

exclaimed a voice from behind me ; and, on looking round, I beheld Barnard, who could not even resist this miserable gambling in this miserable place. And, in two minutes, I saw him hand over, with the utmost coolness, one of the guineas I had given him, which were the last and the only he had in the world.

He looked cleaner than he had done in his own room ; for he was washed and shaved, and had a clean shirt on ; but his dress was dilapidated to the last degree, and the broad daylight shewed still more forcibly what an utter wreck he had become. His face was bloated and discoloured ; his leg was shrivelled ; his whole form bespoke that most wretched of all things—vicious penury!

He proceeded to shew me round the prison ; and, before long, I affected not to have known it was so late, and abridged my visit :

for he seemed to be hail-fellow-well-met with all these vulgar ruffians; and I could not bear to witness such utter degradation, on the part of one whom I had once admired and loved.

How omnivorous is the Fiend of Gaming! It not only flies at the higher game of family ruin, and despair, and suicide; but it stoops to prey upon garbage like this! Nay, more; it prepares the loathsome morsel for itself, and does not sicken in the process. Alas! alas! who could have thought such a fate awaited a man like Barnard—so generous, so brilliant? It is too painful to think that he has thoroughly sunken to suit it.

EXTRACT XXI.

“ ——— Wealth is the burthen of my wooing-dance.”

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

[From the Diary.]

London, March, 1691.


I CAN scarcely bear to think of it; and yet I begin to fear it must be so, after all. Nay, I must resolve one way or the other speedily, for my fortune is in no state to brook delay. Of all things, this is the very last which I could have thought would ever happen to me. Of all predictions, it is that which I should have considered the most false. To marry for money!—I, who was used to figure to myself, with such fasti-

dioussness, the only circumstances under which I would marry, and their inestimable value, if they were ever accomplished!—I, who have had this cup at my very lip, and then have seen it dashed from me for ever!—I, whose feelings of love have been in the grave for years, and which can never kindle into life again! Is it possible? Am I now hesitating, and weighing *pros* and *cons*, whether or not to marry a woman whose only attraction to me is her wealth, and whom, if my fortune were as it was three years ago, I would not marry if she were Queen of Sheba?

Alas! it is too true! “to this complexion am I come at last;” and truly it does not differ more from my former colour of mind, than did the unsightly skull, to which the simile refers, from the cheek painted an inch thick, to which Hamlet prophesies this ultimate

condition. I am a ruined man; and Poverty is the very last guest to whom I am fitted to give reception. At my age, and with my habits, I may say with truth, "I cannot dig." I, who have always had my bread without working, cannot begin to toil for it at five-and-thirty. And as for begging—in sooth, that vocation, however ancient, would not be likely, in my case, to be a very thriving one. I have sold every thing I can sell, except myself; and I suppose *that* must go too at last. Truly, the fair widow will receive what may well be designated by the article which implies an inanimate object, if she buy me. My spirits and buoyancy of temper are more wasted even than my fortune—my heart is in *her* grave!

But why do I mention her?—how *can* I mention her, thus in conjunction with a subject which involves my infidelity to her



memory?—But no, that can never be! For once, there is truth in the distinction which the French draw between inconstancy and infidelity. Inconstant my necessities may, perhaps, oblige me to prove—unfaithful I never can be. My heart will remain true to my buried bride, even while my lips pronounce the vows which shall bind me to a living one!

And is it come to this? Shall I, must I pronounce those vows indeed? Never, never, was the often-quoted line cited with more intimate truth,—

“ My poverty, but not my will, consents.”

Yet, after all, why should I feel so repugnant towards one who has manifested so much prepossession towards me? She has nothing disagreeable in her person. On the contrary, it is rather good than otherwise:—she is well connected; she is still young,—

five and twenty, at the outside. Indeed, her age is better suited to mine than if she were still in her teens. There is nothing to gainsey in all this: and yet I shrink from it most unaccountably. Her fortune is very large, and would place me on that score higher than I ever was. Still, it is sheer poverty which drives me, and that reluctantly, into the match at all. In addition to the causes which naturally indispose me towards marriage, the party is not such as I should have chosen. I am convinced she has not much heart; perhaps, under all the circumstances, it is better it should be so; for, as I cannot repay love with love, it is better that it should not be felt by a woman of keen and delicate feelings. Do I not then even think that the woman to whom I am about to link myself loves me?—Why, yes; after a fashion, I think

she does;—but, oh! how different from the love with which I should have been satisfied in a wife, had I married in former days! If I were an unknown *contadino*, or an obscure cit, I am pretty sure that the merits of my sweet self would never have engaged her attention. owe her reception of me, I believe, more to the way in which I am known and received in that world, to which she looks for every opinion and every taste, than to myself personally. How much less flattering soever this opinion may be to my self-esteem, I have seen too often her veneration and strict obedience to the laws of the code of Fashion, to think that any mortal motive could induce her to marry “a man whom nobody knows.” It is the first good, if it be a good, which I ever derived from my footing in the world—as a small part of this town chuses to call itself.

(1) ~~and more~~. However, I am ~~not~~
 as I ~~do not~~ ~~but~~ I will ~~not~~ ~~be~~
 in ~~Indifference~~. As I cannot sell ~~it~~
 for ~~it~~ ~~to~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~a~~ ~~prevent~~ ~~my~~ ~~possession~~;
 not occupying in ~~London~~. The better
 situation. However, what a train of thought
 does that word ~~occupy~~ ~~up~~! What a different
 preparation for marriage was that!—I &
~~perhaps~~. The weeks I passed there at that time
 were the happiest period of my life. Of
 these are remembrances which, though ~~the~~
~~years~~ ~~have~~ ~~not~~ ~~had~~ ~~them~~ ~~for~~ ~~a~~ ~~moment~~, ~~oc-~~
~~cur~~ ~~and~~ ~~for~~ ~~ever~~, will rush back with
~~all~~ ~~the~~ ~~force~~ ~~upon~~ ~~the~~ ~~heart~~;—which make
 the heart ~~swell~~ ~~and~~ ~~yearn~~, and which cause
 it to ~~find~~ ~~our~~ ~~rest~~ in the very agony of
~~forworn~~ ~~heart~~. She lives ever in my
~~thought~~ ~~and~~ ~~ever~~ ~~before~~ ~~my~~ ~~eyes~~; and yet
 I am in the ~~circumstances~~ of marriage with
~~nothing~~. And that I have been! how my

been thrown away ! How could I think I should have further cause for regret, having lost her ?—Yet, this accursed image strikes upon my heart with a pang remorse, as if it violated that sanctuary which her image has ever been enshrined. ! I cannot—I cannot.—I will rather starve ! starve ?—Alas ! I fear that *is* the alternative !

If I could call back time !—alas ! that is always the wish of those who have misemployed it and flung it away. I am just at what is in other men the prime of their lives : how long that is past in me ! I was born to a competent fortune,—I was born (for, why should I be mock-modest ?) with powers sufficient to have enabled me to *enter*, at least, the path of ambition ;—and now I am trembling on the brink of a mercenary marriage, to keep myself out of gaol ! And

what have I got to shew for my time, my fortune, and my talents? A chilled and enervated heart, a weakened constitution, and beggary. My time has been spent in making myself wretched; the means of which have been making others wretched also. My talents have been frittered away in the pursuit of women, and my fortune has been scattered at the gaming-table. I should knock any man down who said this of me; but I say it of myself,—and it is true.

EXTRACT XXII.

Wildbrain. They are come from church now.

Lurcher. Any great preparation?

Does Justice Algripe shew his power?

Wildbrain. Very glorious,

And glorious people there.

BEAUMONT & FLETCHER.

Friars' Stoke, June, 1801.

I THANK you, my dear Frewin, for your congratulations on my marriage. I am very certain that you do, indeed, wish me joy, and, what is more, happiness; not in the mere formula of words, but with the strongest force of their original meaning. Whether I shall have them or not is another matter, which I will not discuss at present.

Every thing passed off at the wedding in due form, and with due success. There was a proper number of favours, and a proper quantity of bride-cake, and white lace, and white satin. Leader turned out our bridal chariot in a way which satisfied even her brother, the major, whose whole life has been devoted to the study of these things ; and, as I had consulted him in the purchase of the four bays which drew it, of course they were honoured with his approbation also. For my own part, I would have given any thing to have avoided all this display and ostentation ; but I saw she expected and wished for it, and seemed to consider it a matter of course ; so I would not begin quarrelling with her before marriage, about the manner of the very marriage itself. I would have escaped it, if I could, for other reasons than those which lie on the surface. I had

not been at a wedding at St. George's since poor Blanch Delvyn's; and that, as you may suppose, was no very pleasant reminiscence. Poor, poor creature! I almost fancied I could see her, as she stood shrinking and trembling with agony,—yet striving to controul her agitation, to spare her pride the humiliation of seeming to suffer before her dolt of a bridegroom. If he had been only a dolt, it would not so much have mattered, but I believe he was a sad brute also. I 'question,' indeed, which was the most so, her ugly and stupid first husband, or her handsome and clever second; from the circumstances, I think the latter.

Would you believe it, I thought more during the ceremony which was fixing the fate of my life, of that of which I was only a spectator sixteen years ago, than of what was passing at the moment, and in which

I was so prominent an actor? Indeed, I was but too happy to be able to fix my thoughts on any subject but *one*, and yet that one could scarcely at any time be said to be wholly absent from my mind.—But this is an interdicted topic.

This is a very pretty spot, this villa of her's. It is more thoroughly woodland than almost any place I ever inhabited. I could fancy myself a ranger of the days of old, with hawk, and cross-bow, and bolt, and hound, and green jerkins, and bugle-horns, and hunting-hangers slung in buff baldricks, and all the et ceteras of antient forestry. By the way, these are the points to which our poets, and *laudatores temporis acti*, look, and on which they dwell. They say nothing of the peasant thrust from his home, his roof-tree broken, his hearth laid bare, and all the cruel and bloody effects of the Nor-



man forest-laws. Perhaps it is out of respect to their descendants, the modern game laws; which bear the same resemblance to them as a modern lord in Rotten Row does to his ancestor in casque and corslet.

The place is only a villa, and therefore not very extensive; but we have all the advantage of the forest round; vistas open into it through green alleys, as far as the eye can reach. The house, too, is admirable; fitted in the extreme of luxury, not always, perhaps, in the best of taste, but better than I had expected. Marsh, probably, was in great measure left to himself, which may account for it. I fear we may not hope at present to see you and Lady Katharine here; but next year you must not fail us. Again, thanks for all your kind expressions. God bless you! my oldest and best friend.

P. B.

[From the Diary.]

THANK Heaven ! I have answered most of the congratulatory letters on my marriage. Eugh !—what a labour it has been to mince through the usual common-places of namby-pamby thanks for namby-pamby compliments—vapid, worldly, worthless all ! And yet, my letter to Frewin, where I was under no restraint, cost me, probably, more trouble than all the rest together. To him, I could not shelter myself under the set-phrases appertaining to the occasion. Still less could I write in the tone of a rapturous bridegroom revelling in the society of his bride. I am sure I never wrote a letter so little to the point : I believe I talked of every thing except my marriage and my wife.

“ My wife ? ” Is it so, then, at last ? Have



I, in reality, a wife? I have often dreamed I had one; and have been delighted, when I awoke, to find I had only dreamed it. But I believe it is real this time. Still, the conjunction of the two words "my wife" is strange to me, and I can scarcely bring either my pen or my tongue to connect them glibly. And yet, how eternal these three weeks have seemed since our marriage! or rather, perhaps, each individual day and hour! To keep up a tête-à-tête with such a woman is more laborious than breaking stones on the highway. Such shallowness—such emptiness! Her *line* is being languid and sentimental: the first she accomplishes by lying on a couch with a novel in her hand, of which she has read about a third of the first volume since we have been here. The weather is superb—that of a real English summer, (which, when it *does* occur, is the

most delicious of all things,) the country is most beautiful, her own gardens are exquisite, and yet she has been out only three times since she has been here, and only once farther than the lawn ! She cannot bear the fatigue, forsooth !—she, who is as strong and healthy as a dairy-maid ! As to her sentiment, she has about as much of it as Aboukir, the great dog. She talks sentimentality, which is a certain sign of real sentiment not existing within. And accordingly, I find they have scarcely ever seen her in the village, where, of course, its own proportion of distress exists—distress which is so soothed and alleviated, especially when sickness is added to it, by the mere presence, and a few kind expressions, of the *Dame du lieu*. But “her feelings are too sensitive to allow her to witness such scenes !” Stuff ! they are not too sensitive for her to suffer them

to exist. How paltry and contemptible are all the prettinesses of sentiment in comparison with active humanity!—how false, indeed, are they without it! They remind me of Rousseau, who aspired to be the founder of the first rational system of education the world had seen, sending his own children to the Foundling Hospital. Probably, after all, it was better for them than if they had been so many Emiles.

I never can believe in the sensibility of a person who, placed in the situation to which I have alluded, does not take advantage of it, to benefit and assist the neighbouring poor. There is, probably, no position in which there is so much, and such easy, power of doing good. To listen, with apparent sympathy and interest, to the little tale of the misfortunes and sorrows of a villager whom poverty pinches, or sickness

childhood and my early youth are connected with it. There is not a tree, nor a stone, that does not call up a crowded train of associations of my early days. My poor mother, too—my excellent mother—it is with Dodderidge that her image is most intimately connected in my memory. There, indeed, was her worthy home; there she was beloved by all, gentle and simple; there she was endeared to all by some act of kindness or friendship, or of direct benevolence. Ah! if she had lived longer—to preside at my table, to direct my household, I might, nay I must, have proved a very different person from the reckless cast-away I have been. In the first place, I should not have gone ‘walking the world’ so early, so long, so completely my own master. There would have been the moral controul of being domesticated with such a parent; I should

have had her feelings to respect, her expectations to answer. I should have had a check from evil, an impulse towards good. If any thing could have restrained the natural bent of temperament, it would have been my affection, my veneration for my mother.

And probably it *would* have been restrained. For it was chiefly to its first development that it owed its future expansion, and exclusiveness. If I had not, at seventeen, fallen into the hands of a person like Mathilde du Buissey, my whole course of life might have been different. But she was exactly formed to win and to spoil a boy of strong passions and romantic feelings. She was young enough, and beautiful enough, to attract him most powerfully; she was ardent enough, and sufficiently in earnest, to gratify his feelings of romance, and quite to

intoxicate his self-love ; while, on the other hand, she was old enough, and French enough, to be a perfect mistress of the whole theory and practice of the heart ; she had her own feelings sufficiently under command to do what she pleased with mine, while they were sufficiently excited and engaged to give her animation and interest in the connection. Add to all this, the graceful talents of society so much possessed by most of her countrywomen at that period ; and, I think, I could not have fallen into better hands for moulding me into what I afterwards became. But, in an additional way, also, this woman influenced the formation of my character. When the intoxication of my passion for her was over, and the *glamour* fell from my eyes, I became, even at that early period of life, pretty well aware of her real character, as I have painted it.

This tended both to deaden that fine feeling of romance, which is perhaps one of the most valuable (because the most easily lost) of the properties of youth,—and also to give me premature experience and knowledge of those folds of the female heart—of those springs of womanly action, with which men seldom become so early acquainted. Her stock of knowledge was, as it were, transferred bodily to me; and I was naturally too vain of its acquisition, and too eager to assay its quality, not to rush immediately into that course of life, which has made me—what I am now!

I know very well, for I have felt it, how flattering it is to the vanity of a young man to possess and to exert this species of knowledge. But I could tell any one, who may be beginning to employ it, that, if he do, he will never repent it but once, and that will

be all his life. I may speak on the subject, for I have had experience, bitter experience. "I waive the quantum o' the sin"—I will put it, not upon its effects upon others, (which is the chief and most fearful part,) but upon himself. Not to theorise, here is an example. I recollect perfectly, in the days of my early manhood, in the first flush of my successes, in despite of all my friendship for Frewin, I used, on this particular subject, to feel towards him a certain pity, perhaps a little tainted with contempt. And now, as indeed, on looking over what I have written to-day, is sufficiently apparent, he is, as regards his ultimate fortunes with respect to women, the object of my greatest envy.* There could scarcely be a stronger instance than this.

* Envy is not the word—but we have none in the language, that I know of. Envy, without its malice, is what I mean to express.—*Note of Mr. Blount.*

Then, the anxieties, the regrets, the remorse—the deep and crushing sorrow—the dark, heavy, indescribable, insupportable melancholy—the false, feverish, and desperate excitements—the vacuity and destitution of the revulsions which succeed;—all these are branches from the same root—all these are fruits of which the blossoms are such sweet and fair flowers!

Well, now, if I can, I am to take a fresh departure—I am to appear in my new character of married man. Heaven only knows how it will sit upon me, with a partner like that I have chosen. Chosen? No;—there was no choice in the case. Will you marry, or will you starve? This was the question which stern Fate proposed to me. I have married. Having done so, I must make the best of it. It is vain to look back, as I have been doing, to what might have been.

What is, is fixed, and to that I must turn my thoughts.—Madame must have made her toilet by this time, and I will go and see what she is about.

EXTRACT XXIII.

“ Rien ne nous affecte vivement, rien ne nous intéresse à un certain point. Une mollesse efféminée et la paresse se glissant dans les cercles des oisifs, énervent bientôt l'Âme, et l'empêchent de sentir. . . . La beauté mâle et touchante des grands objets ne nous remue plus ; nous nous attachons au colifichet, et notre goût devient mince, inconstant, et frivole.”

GARRA.

[From the Diary.]

London, February, 1892.

WHAT a miserable, empty, vapid, heartless, ignorant thing is the World, so called, of Fashion ! Such coldness, such fatuity, such utter froth !

“ Nature it thwarts, and contradicts all reason :
’Tis stiff French stays, and fruit—when out of
season ;

A rose—if half-a-guinea be the price ;
A set of bays, scarce bigger than six mice ;
To visit those we never wish to see ;
Marriage 'twixt those who never can agree ;
Old dowagers dress'd, painted, patch'd, and
curl'd—

This is Bon Ton, and this we call The World !”*

—Though these spirited and graphic lines are nearly forty years old, they are, with very slight allowances for the change of passing fashions, strictly applicable still. Empty vanity, cold hypocrisy, shallow pretension ; these are the characteristics of the race, now as then. And have I only just found this out ?—Have I lived to these years to make this notable discovery at this time of day ?—No, truly ; I have had a pretty clear conception of the state of things, since they were first subjected to my observation. But, as a

* Colman the Elder's Prologue to Bon Ton.

single man, it is not necessary to subject oneself to any particular part of the varied and fantastic medley which may chance to be distasteful. I had, therefore, hitherto taken the cream, according to my individual taste and judgment, off the milk of London society. There is no place, I think, in the world, where, to drop all metaphor, so much, and such excellent, social enjoyment is to be found as there is in this town, if we know where and how to look for it. But again, if we mix, either from choice, or from force of circumstances, with the full throng of the 'London season,' there can, I think, be, scarcely by possibility, any thing more slight, shallow, valueless, and uninteresting than the general run of the persons whom we shall find there.

For my own part, having been much on the Continent in the early part of my life.

I did not, at that time, acquire the London habits; which, when so acquired, generally stick to a man through life. I had enjoyed, indeed, too much of the pleasantest society in Paris, in its best times, very much to relish what I found to be the common run of parties, &c. in London. I, thence, gave some time (it will always take some time) and some trouble, to sift the society which I met; and, letting the chaff and dust fall to the ground, selected with care and assiduity the real grain which remained behind. Take it all in all, *this* perhaps was at all times better in London than any where else in the world:—since the Revolution, it has certainly been so. Confining myself, therefore, chiefly to *this*, I have never been sufficiently crossed by the things and qualities which I have been reprobating, very strongly to excite my spleen against them. If I found they an-

noyed me, I got out of their way; and there was an end of it.

But now the case is greatly altered. Married to a woman to whose tastes I owe some consideration, I am no longer so wholly master of my own choice of society. And, as her tastes unhappily lead her to the barren land of Fashion, I am, in a great degree, compelled to accompany her on her journey.

It is, indeed, a barren and an unwholesome land. It produces nothing itself; and it poisons and withers up every bud of generous feeling and warm disposition which comes within the influence of its *malaria*. How many young and amiable persons have I not seen spoiled, utterly spoiled, by being Fashion-bitten! Like the bite of a mad dog, it makes them shrink from the natural streams of unsophisticated tastes and feelings. They no longer see, hear, feel, smell, taste,

as their own uncorrupted temperaments would lead them. Every thing is conventional, every thing is false. They put on glasses coloured with the colouring of Fashion, and every object is tinted with their hue. Every natural and spontaneous burst of feeling is repressed or checked in its birth; every generous emotion is lost, or, at the best, hidden.

Why is it that we never get thoroughly acquainted with people, women especially, whom we meet only in London? Why is it that ten days passed together in a country-house give you more real insight into a person's character, than as many years in the common intercourse of town life? Because every thing here is strained, cold, and artificial; because nothing is undisguised, unacted, real. Hence arise the vast number of ill-assorted and unhappy marriages which

annually take place. Two persons meet each other at balls and parties—at the most, they sit next to each other a few times at dinner. But, as for what the real character, disposition, talents, and (what is more important than all) the real temper of each other may be, they have scarcely more accurate or detailed knowledge than if they had never met.

Nor is this all. If the world of Fashion spoils many, how many more are there in whom there has never been any thing to spoil—and that, too, among those who figure in its foremost ranks, and have enjoyed some of its chief successes? It is not, certainly, so common as it used to be, to see men vain of their lack of information, and of (all but fashionable) acquirement; though even now we do meet such things sometimes. But with women it is the case every day. “I

don't aspire to be blue"—"I am not a learned lady," are the phrases which are uttered with a hisping sneer, in excuse for ignorance, which a boy in the third form at Eton would be flogged for. I detest and despise 'the blues,' as much as, probably more than, those who are the loudest and most frequent in their condemnation. But I do so, not because they possess sense and information, but for a contrary reason; because they are noisy pretenders to them, and possess them not; or at the best, some few of them, who may have some smattering, are pedantic in its display; and that is almost as bad as the other. But I am yet to learn, that ignorance is a thing to be justly vain of; or that the mincing affectation of infantine vacuity is not to the full as revolting as it is certainly more insipid, than even the follies of the worst denomination of *bas-bleus*.

who ever bored one at a conversazione. How strange it is, that the persons with whom we are to pass our lives, in the most constant and intimate intercourse, should strive to recommend themselves to us by setting forth that they are incapable of understanding one word in ten we say.

Constantly mixing in society like this—discussing and taking interest in the petty questions which arise in such a body, must necessarily contract the mind, and reduce it, if it were originally of a higher order, to the level of those by whom it is surrounded. Accordingly, we find men who are nothing but men of fashion, to be the most empty unprofitable coxcombs of any of the varieties of that most extensive genus. If they are not quite so frivolous as the women, they are more contemptible; for frivolity is less fitted to their sex.

Let me single out, like Sterne, an individual captive in the cage of Fashion, into whose soul, not the iron, but the tinsel, has entered; whose energies, once equal to greater things, have, like the Ogre's seven-league boots, when drawn upon the legs of Hop-o'-my-Thumb, contracted themselves to the size and weight of the matters to which they have been, for so many years, directed. He would almost be worthy of the name of the hero of Antoine Hamilton's fairy-tale,—he might well be called 'Prince Fiddlestick!' I have one in my mind's-eye at this moment, but whom I will not name, with whom I was at College, and who was originally a man of some capabilities of mind. For the first year he was there, he remained suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between literature and foppery; but (for in those days fantastic colours were still worn) a pink satin lining to a coat of Lord B.'s

turned the scale, and he has been engrossed by fashion and a feather ever since. A wrinkle in his leather breeches is to him, like the doubled rose-leaf of the Sybarite, positive agony; and he was once, if it would not have discomposed his neckcloth, nearly cutting his throat, on account of being disappointed in receiving a card for a particular party at Lady ———'s. He judges of a man, not by his being well-bred, or well-informed, nor even by his being rich; but by his being well or ill-dressed. I have seen ineffable and overflowing pity and contempt beam upon his lip, on meeting an acquaintance in a last-year's coat. And he cut the best friend he had in the world, because, one day, he took shelter from a shower of rain in a Chelsea stage. In society he says little, except sometimes to correct an error as to "what is allowable;" which he does with

a gravity equally sincere and ridiculous. His gravity, indeed, is seldom disturbed.

“ He never laughs, whatever jest prevails.”

He goes farther than the Delphic oracle of his tribe, * who says that laughter is a most vulgar way of shewing mirth; for he holds that mirth is a very vulgar emotion, and ought never to find entrance into the breast of a fine gentleman. Emotions of all kinds, indeed, are to be deprecated; and, to do him justice, he is as impassive, imperturbable, and cold, as if he were really the block in the barber's shop-window. Truly, this unfeathered biped is worthy to rank among that species called Man!

As a pendant to this picture, we have Lady ———. Her heart, mind, soul, and body have, for years, been engrossed and

* Lord Chesterfield.

swallowed up by this one pursuit. If it be less ridiculous and offensive in her sex than among men, as regards frivolity, it is probably more repulsive with respect to matters of the heart. In woman, where the energies of the intellect are usually less called into action, those of the feelings receive a proportionate increase of force and developement. We are so accustomed to find it, that we look for it in all cases, even in those where it does not exist. Accordingly, Lady———believes the maxim, that Love is the history of woman's life, while it is only an episode in that of man. Fashion is the history of her life, and if Love ever existed in it, it was only a very brief digression at the beginning. There is a tradition, indeed, that she was in love, as a girl, with L. of the Guards, or, rather, with the clothes to which he was appended; for he had, at that time,

the reputation of being the best-dressed man in London. But she was doomed to the common destiny of women of the world;—

“A fop her passion, but her prize a sot,”—

She married old Lord —, who had a coronet and a house in Grosvenor-square to offer her; and scarcely bestowed a sigh upon the Colonel, who had nothing in the world but his commission, an epaulette, and a good pair of legs. From that time she has followed her vocation. If her heart has ever whispered to her, which I doubt, she has never listened to it for a moment, but kept on the *un-even* “tenor of her way,” struggling to the top of the gaudy pyramid of Fashion—now on the point of reaching the apex, and now again passed by some newer competitor in the race. And is it to objects like these that woman should yield up that fairest and most lovely gift of Nature—her

young heart? Is it to the cold glitter of the unfeeling world that she should sacrifice the warmth and freshness of her early life? Oh! did but women know how much the natural charm of unsophisticated feeling is superior, in the eyes and to the hearts of all men who deserve the name, to the utmost triumphs of Fashion, they would not abandon pure and touching Nature to follow her cold, callous, and fantastic opposite.

But in these persons there was scarcely any thing to spoil. Even Fashion could hardly make them more silly, frivolous, and heartless than they originally were. They embraced her doctrines without hesitation, and followed them without regret. But *there are* instances in which she has much more to answer; where feelings originally warm have been chilled, and talents originally good have been nullified, by her tor-

pedo touch. I recollect, when I was at Dodderidge, seven or eight years ago, remarking, on account of her beauty and graceful manners, the daughter of a neighbour of mine, a country-gentleman of moderate fortune, with whom I was acquainted. This girl, it was said, was engaged to be married to a young clergyman, a cousin of her own, whose family lived in the next county; a very excellent and well-informed young man, who had distinguished himself much at the University; and was only waiting to take priest's orders, to be inducted to a valuable living, and to marry the object of his early attachment. He was a very good-looking fellow into the bargain, and was a very respectable proficient in those little accomplishments of society, which are of more importance, often, in female estimation, than classical arguments, or College honours.

As ill-luck, however, would have it, the winter previous to their intended marriage, this young person passed with an aunt of her's in town. The aunt lived in the throng of fashionable life ; and, seeing her niece to be attractive, both in person and manners, she, first insidiously, and then more directly, strove to inculcate into her that she was worthy of better things than a country parson—that she would be completely throwing herself away, if she married him ; to be mewed up in an obscure village—and all the other arguments so easily available in such a case. These preachments were followed up by a constant and intoxicating round of dissipation, where the admiration she met with totally turned the poor girl's head, and made her look back almost with disdain upon the simple pleasures of her earlier life, and the unfashionable lover to

whom she was betrothed. The consequence was, that when he came to town in the Spring, she was almost ashamed of him, in the midst of the gay and glittering crowd by which she was surrounded; and the matter ended in the match being broken off, after his feelings had been cut to the quick during its course.

What was the ultimate fate of the two parties? He, who had been sacrificed to Fashion, after some time married another; and, when I was down in ——shire, last year, to let Dodderidge, I met him and his family, and almost pictured them to myself as the *beau idéal* of calm happiness. I was just going to be married myself, which might, perhaps, have been the occasion of my drawing the——contrast, I was going to say.

The lady married also—a very fashionable, very needy, very profligate man. I

happened to see her last week. She' was withered in person; her fine form was shrunken, and her fine bloom was faded away. Her eye looked haggard, and as though it were the habitual seat of sorrow. Her husband is said to be a man of execrable temper; and his neglect is, I believe, the best part of his conduct towards her. Still she drags on the monotonous round of Fashion, for which she sacrificed so much—to which she now is herself a victim. She now finds, I take it, how weary, stale, and unprofitable the world soon becomes to its votaries; and that one touch of true Nature, and real feeling, is worth all its pleasures and pageants put together. But now, *it is too late.*

EXTRACT XXIV.

“ London now is out of town,
Who in England tarries ?
Who can bear to linger there,
When all the world's at Paris ?

Song.

[From the Diary.]

Paris, July, 1892.

MIRACLY upon me ! how every thing is changed in this town, since I was here last ! To be sure, they have been stirring years which have elapsed since then ; and, with regard to political matters, I was of course pretty well prepared to find what I have found. But I did not quite expect, though perhaps I ought, so complete a re-

volution in society also. The Fauxbourg St. Germain is deserted.—At Versailles, grass grows in the courts.—Instead of a King with powdered hair, ‘à l’aile de pigeon,’ and a ‘habit Français,’ I find a Consul with lank locks, and a general’s uniform, reviewing his troops, on a white horse at full gallop. In like manner every vestige, not only of the *vieille cour*, but of the former state of society altogether, has passed away. No coteries, no *petit soupers*, no conversation teeming with subtle compliments, and epigrammatic turns of expression. Every thing now seems active and energetic—occasionally coarse, perhaps, and with the faults arising from coarseness; but, for that very reason, perfectly free from all those which appertain to frivolity. Society certainly is not so brilliant and refined, nor is it nearly so agreeable to those who seek

it merely for society's sake; but it bespeaks a much higher and stronger tone to pervade men's minds in general throughout the country. There is no longer that monotony, which, in despite of all its charms, was undoubtedly felt even in the delightful *réunions* of which I speak. The great events, which have so recently passed at home and abroad, prevent the petty topics of passing occurrences to have the same interest which they formerly had, in the absence of all more stirring subjects of discussion.

But, in despite of all this, which I am obliged to admit, when I come coolly to think upon the subject, certain it is that *to me* Paris gives very inferior gratification to what it formerly gave. To be sure, I have undergone my revolution also: I am older, sadder, in weaker health, and married. When I first came to Paris in eighty-eight,

I was young, in full health and blood, eager in my pursuit of pleasure, and tolerably successful in obtaining it. I had the good fortune also to gain admittance into a most delightful circle. Without being at all a literary man myself, I mixed with the *gens de lettres*. Marmontel's house was open to me, and Grimm I met constantly, and listened, with the utmost interest, to the piquant observations upon what was passing around us, which gave so peculiar a charm and vivacity to his conversation. Now, Marmontel is dead, Grimm has retreated to the court of his old patron the Duke of Saxe Gotha ; all who composed that set are dispersed and gone. The Abbé Morellet is the only one of them who remains ; and he now is more remarkable for that circumstance itself, than for the animated and sensible social talents which he contributed in those days, as his

share of that exquisite mental *pic-nic*. I have been to see him; and our conversation almost wholly turned upon the total extinction of the society in which we had formerly met.

Now, I am here, not to reside some time, and to mix with the Parisians as a resident; but as a mere John Bull traveller, with my wife in one hand, and my catalogue in the other, come to see the sights. And, plague take it! my wife is as much out of place here, as any cockney dame who has never been out of the sound of Bow bell. I may almost be thankful that there are no longer such *soirées*, as those at poor Madame de Corvillac's; for, upon my soul! I should scarcely dare present her there. Not that she is not very well presentable, if she would but hold her tongue: but she talks such ineffable nonsense; she asks such excruciating

questions ; she——but I will not talk of her just now.

With respect to 'the sights,' there can be no doubt of their extreme increase and improvement since the Revolution. The collection at the Louvre is certainly the most splendid assemblage of productions of art in the world. I shall not stop to enquire how it came there ; it is sufficient that it is there, for me to go and luxuriate upon its riches, day after day.

Alas ! with what emotions did I behold the Venus, here in her new abode ! I last saw her at Florence.—At Florence ! Oh ! what a world of memory dwells in that one word ! What a tissue of fond thoughts, of passionate affection, of deep love, does it call up ? My visit there was the crisis of my life, as *a subsequent time* was its catastrophe. The sight of this statue made those

days almost present to me again—present for all the painful condiments of passion, but not including any of its delightful attributes. I recollect going to pass hours in the gallery, day after day, while the fever of anxiety was preying upon my heart, that I might, if possible, forget the passage of time, in the contemplation of all the beauties and wonders by which I was surrounded. In the Tribune, and in the Cabinet of Bronzes, I used mostly to take my stand—gazing, in the one, on all its peculiar riches of art, both in sculpture and in painting; and, in the other, on that exquisite piece of statuary which almost renders the presence of any thing else needless.*

But, though my eyes were on the Venus, (in marble or on canvass) the Fornarina, the

* Mr. Blount, I believe, alludes to the figure known as one of John of Bologna's Mercury.

Apollino, or the Mercury, my mind was not with them. My mind ceaselessly dwelled upon the effect my letter might have upon her—upon the chances for and against her compliance. Suspense is certainly the most wearing and intolerable, though not the severest, of all mental inflictions: it, more thoroughly than any other, incapacitates the mind for any continuous attention, the body for any rest. And during those days, accordingly, when the fate of my life was in the balance, when no exertion of my own could influence the decision one way or the other, I used, in my restlessness, to wander to the gallery, for refuge from my thoughts, in the midst of the productions of Genius; and even there I found it not. The Venus, which stood so conspicuous before my eyes at those times, is now here. It is unchanged; the marble beauty knows no fading. But

the human loveliness which I then doated upon, which I doat on still, *that* has mouldered in the grave; and I would to God I were cold and senseless as that marble, or in my grave also!—But I must not pursue this train of thought.

[The following is dated a few days later.]

I DINED yesterday with one of the few families of my old acquaintance who have still an establishment at Paris. Indeed, one of the very striking changes here, is the almost total disappearance of those whom I knew not above twelve years ago. To be sure, most of them have emigrated, and a good many have been guillotined. In many other ways, also, the Revolution has tended to disperse them, so that there are really very few of the same people to be met with. Yesterday, however, I dined in company with

five or six of them; for M. de Rivière had purposely assembled as many as he could find to meet me. Time seems to have been almost as busy with them as he has with me. The rich have become poor; the gay, sad; the young, prematurely old. Madame de Rivière herself, whom I recollect one of the prettiest, giddiest, and most lively women in Paris, has since undergone adventures enough to furnish forth half-a-dozen volumes of a modern novel. She was in the Conciergerie, during the reign of terror, for eight months, expecting daily to be led forth to execution, as her fellow-prisoners were on all sides of her. Her account of her imprisonment, and she is not backward in giving it, is, in truth, one of the most interesting things I ever heard. The succession of prisoners, which entered and left the prison during the time she was there, displayed to her almost every

variety of human bearing under fear, suffering, and approaching death. Some displayed a shocking levity—others a deep sense of religion—others were altogether paralyzed by the horror of their situation. At last, Madame de Rivière said, Death had become so familiar an object of contemplation, and the escaping and the suffering it seemed to be so very much a matter of chance, that, even within the walls of that terrible place, Fear, among those who had been its inhabitants some time, ceased to exist in any very strong degree. As, among military men on a campaign, the constant nearness, and yet extreme uncertainty, of death, causes the grisly King to lose all his terrors, so in this case, nearly similar causes produced nearly similar effects. Some persons wrote their names—others sang—others plunged into as much madness as could be compassed.

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It caused me, I confess, very considerable surprise thus to find a Parisian *petite-maîtresse* metamorphosed into a person who related historical anecdotes, from her own knowledge; and who had had a personal share in the tortments by which her country has been

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It caused me, I confess, very considerable surprise thus to find a Parisian *petite-maîtresse* metamorphosed into a person who related historical anecdotes, from her own knowledge; and who had had a personal share in the terrible events by which her country has been

agitated for the last dozen years. But this surprise soon received considerable extension, with regard to numbers. I naturally made enquiries concerning those whom I had formerly known in the same society as the De Rivières; and a very great proportion, I found, had, in those stirring times, thrown off the slough of indolence and frivolity, and soared forth with all the activity, energy, and dignity of endurance which their positions respectively demanded. “Ah ! la jolie petite Marquise de Rebours ?—elle fût guillotinée deux jours avant la chute de Robespierre.”—“La belle Comtesse de Freylus ?—elle fût massacrée par les Septembriseurs !”—“M. de Monjoye ?—il fût déporté—et mourût à la Guiane.” Such, and such like, were the answers I received to my enquiries concerning those who had been our common companions and friends, during my

former visits to Paris. There was certainly nothing very worthy of wonder in a certain proportion of these persons having shared in the sacrifices of the Revolution; but the extraordinary discrepancy between the persons as I remember them, and their ultimate fates, was so wide and peculiar as to strike me, I confess, very strongly with surprise. I recollect hearing a friend of mine, who had lived much in Ireland, say, in speaking of two of the very few persons of condition who, not being military men, lost their lives in the Rebellion,* that any body who had known them as he had done, in the hospitality of their homes, and the enjoyments of their convivial intercourse, would have thought them the very last persons whose fate it would be to fall in battle. The likelihood was infinitely less, in the instance

* The late Lord O'N—— and Mr. Luke G——.

of those of whom I have been speaking; for some of them were women—of rank, of fortune, of brilliant fashion. Who could have thought that such as these would become the inmates of prisons, and die upon the scaffold?

Madame de Rivière, in her turn, asked me concerning many of those who had emigrated to England. I told her, among other things, in what condition I found Madame de Corvillac. She would scarcely believe me. “*Quoi ! Madame de Corvillac nettoyer sa chambre ?*”—this was the circumstance which appeared to her the most extraordinary and incomprehensible. She, who had been herself a prisoner in one of the worst of prisons, overlooked the loss of rank, of fortune, of country, in the single fact, that a delicate and luxurious woman had done domestic offices with her own hand ! There was, certainly,

some contrast between the second floor in Carnaby-street, and the magnificent hotel in the Fauxbourg St. Germain ; but the changes in moral points would, to any but a French-woman, have seemed the more striking and remarkable.

But, among all these changes, there is another, which, though it was not mentioned, was not, I could perceive, overlooked—the change in myself. Alas ! the wear and tear of the heart produce a stronger effect upon the person, than even its own. Regret, remorse, and self-reproach, corrode the body as well as the mind. I am no longer “ *le jeune Anglais vif comme un Français même* :”—I am saddened in heart, soured in temper, broken in constitution.—But I am beginning to croak ; and, when I do that, I know by experience the only way is to break off at once.

EXTRACT XXV.

“ Il faut errer dans les lieux où l'on a été aimé, dans ces lieux dont l'immobilité est là, pour attester le changement de tout le reste.”

MADAME DE STAEL.

[From the Diary.]

Spa, September, 1802.

I SHOULD wish to have avoided coming hither if I could; but a large party of my wife's relations is here, and I could not tell her she should not come. This is another of the pleasures of marrying for money, that a man of common feeling must shew some deference to the wishes of her to whom he owes every thing. If it were not for this motive, I should not be here at this moment.

Since I have been on the Continent lately, I have had many pangs and twitches from revisiting former scenes, and recalling former occurrences. But I have not yet been anywhere where the *locale* was likely to affect me so strongly as this. It was just at this season of the year, too, that I was here before. This adds strongly to the identity of appearance of the country round. The leaves have the same tinge, the lights which shine upon them are of the same degree of intensity. Every thing seems the same, except my heart: that is cold and dead—almost as poor Blanch herself. Poor Blanch, indeed!—for surely never was woman's lot so unhappily cast as her's. From her forced marriage, and from her marriage of love, she alike drew unhappiness. The only question is, which was the more intense? Surely the latter; for to the misery of an ill-assorted

union were added the sense of guilt, and the pangs of ill-requital. And her end, too!—I am told it took place in utter abandonment and dereliction. Oh! man, man! what have you to answer who thus break the heart which adores you—which has sacrificed every thing for your sake!—or rather, what have you not to answer?—It will be a fearful question, one day.

This town is exactly the same as it was when the Lumleys and I used to lounge about it together. The ponies still stand, as of yore, in the little *place* before the Poubon*—they almost look as if they were the same ponies, so exactly similar are their general characteristics. Some of the men who let them out, certainly are the same; for one of them recognized me, and claimed the pre-

* The name of one of the principal pump-rooms.

ence over his companions, for old sake's
e. He averred that I had always hired
y horses from him "— quand Monsieur
promenait si souvent, avec cette belle
ame Anglaise, Miladi Lomlé." Of course,
his not only insured him my custom, but
cost me a six-franc piece, as a *pour-boire*.

I mounted a poney, which might have
been the very one I had ridden by Blanch's
side, could it have lived so long, and sought
that well-remembered valley, which had been
the scene of our explanation the day be-
fore I left Spa. As I descended the steep
pitch, which leads into it, I could scarcely
believe that one who had been so full of
animated and beautiful life, as my com-
panion, the last time I had been here, could,
for so long a time, have passed away from
among living beings, and left behind her no
trace, except, perhaps, in the heart of Lady

———*, and in a casual remembrance in my own. *Here*, it is true, on the very spot which had witnessed such a scene between us, her image rose before me with distinctness and strong pity. But, at ordinary times, one regret and one love, which ever inhabit my heart, swallow up, like Moses' rod, all others. I regard it, in some measure, as treachery to those sacred feelings, to allow any others, for ever so short a time, or in ever so slight a degree, to intrude into their place. And it is certain, however strange it may seem, that while I sat upon the very bank where I had formerly sat with Blanch, I thought less of her than of that other affection from which every tender thought, and every regretful feeling, which

* The lady mentioned in the 'Story of Blanch Delvyn,' under the name of Margaret.—ED.

rise in my bosom, usually spring; and to which, at all events, they invariably revert.

Nevertheless, I have, perhaps, felt more strongly since I have been at Spa, than I have ever hitherto done, the immediate opposition of my former to my present self. When I was here last, I was in the prime of my youth; full of health, and, though I affected at the time to think otherwise, of spirits; living in the intimate society of a delightful woman, with my feelings sufficiently interested in her to give particular zest to our intercourse, and yet not so deeply committed as to cause me painful anxiety or uneasiness. Now my health is broken, my spirits are gone. Oh! what a difference there is between the being "sad as night, only for wantonness"—and that settled gloom of the heart, which springs from real afflic-

tion and irreparable misfortune. 'This is the difference, as regards myself; and for my companion, I have a heartless, cold-mannered, uninformed woman of fashion, to whom I have sold myself 'for a mess of pottage.' The best of our *ménage*, is that we live much apart; for I can barely conceal my contempt and dislike for her; and it is cruel and wrong to shew it. There never were two people who lived together, between whom there was less intimate communion. If Plato's doctrine of 'half-spirits' be true, we undoubtedly are two halves who never were meant to be united into one whole. Her relations, too, must think me a proud, reserved, self-concentrated man; for I have done little else but wander alone among the woods and hills since I have been here; instead of joining their miscalled parties of pleasure to ~~the~~ Mon Jardin, and the other

Lions in the environs. Indeed, I believe they would have some justice in their judgment; for my health has been worse, and my temper more soured, during the last few weeks, than they ever were before; and I certainly have been any thing but gracious to them.

My wife wants to go on to Italy; but *I will not* do that. It would tear my heart to pieces. Go to Italy with *her*? O, never! I do not yet tell her so in direct terms; but I will take especial care that the journey never takes place. To Switzerland, à la bonne heure; but not one foot beyond the Alps. It has been bad enough to encounter the local reminiscences here;—what, then, would it be to expose myself to those in Italy? If she likes to go into Germany, or to Switzerland, or to the South of France, I will take her, with all my heart;—but Italy?

Italy?—the very word has the power of a spell over my inmost soul, and lashes up its sufferings to frenzy. No!—on that land shall my foot never be set again.

EXTRACT XXVI.

——— dum bibimus, dum sertæ, unguenta, puellas,
Poscimus, obrepat non intellecta senectus.

JUVENAL, Sat. IX.*

[From the Diary.]

Montpellier, January, 1803.

I COULD wish to pass the remainder of the winter here; for I feel the mild air of the South of France of advantage to me. But wars, and rumours of wars, make it necessary for us to bend our steps homewards.

* These fine lines are thus rendered by Mr. Gifford:—

Lo! while we give the unregarded hour
To wine and revelry in pleasure's bower,
The noiseless foot of Time steals swiftly by,
And, ere we dream of manhood, age is nigh. ED.

I should not at all like to be in France, in the event of a war breaking out ; and, I must say, I consider that event not at all unlikely to occur very shortly.

It is sad to be obliged to (what is called) "take care of oneself."—Till within these two or three years, I have always had the most robust health, and I have consequently borne its decline with great impatience and ill-grace. What I like least of all is, the gradual progress which my illness, or rather my want of health, has made. I feel as if my strength were wasting away by regular degrees ; and think, sometimes, that I shall not live long. And yet, I am very loth to die. I cling to life, for I am not fit for death. 'To die?'—'death?'—Is it then already come to this? Am I really beginning to prepare for the great transition, as for an event not far distant? What has become of

my life? How have I allowed it to slip through my hands, unheeded, unimproved? Yes, my youth has been wasted in empty pleasures; and sickness and premature age now overtake me, unprepared for their coming, impatient of their presence, fearful of their effects. My life has not been such as to make me descend the hill cheerfully, looking onward with hope and humble confidence for repose and reward at its base. *I* look back with bitter regret towards the summit, and am urged painfully on, my reluctant steps endeavouring to struggle against the force of Time. Oh! how I have squandered those gifts and advantages which Nature conferred on me!—how I have wasted that best of all her gifts, time! The retrospect of a life like mine is indeed bitter, when viewed from the boundaries of age, from the vicinity of the grave. I wonder

at my infatuation—I despise my folly—I shudder at my guilt. Yes, guilt—for that which, at the time, I considered as a venial error, or as a successful piece of gallantry, whereof to be vain, now appears to me in its true colours. The trappings of the world are stripped from it; and it appears in the real deformity of its nature. Many things, even, which had faded entirely from my memory, now revive again, and speak to my soul in accusation.

Neither have I those consolations and appliances which usually soften the decline of life :—

“ ——— all that should accompany old age,
I must not look to have ——— ”

Married I am, it is true, but I know none of the amenities and charities of domestic life. I feel the ties of marriage, only by their gall-

ing. I have no ideas in common with my wife; our feelings, our wishes, our habits of thought, are totally dissimilar. How, then, can we assist each other in bearing the ills which fall to the lot of humanity? How can natures so unlike soothe and comfort each other?

On looking over what I have said, I find I have been writing in the tone of a sexagenarian, at the least. Who would imagine that they were the thoughts and feelings of a man under forty? But old age is not regulated merely by years. The "way of life" may fall "into the sear, the yellow leaf"—long before winter, or even advanced autumn, in reality, arrives. The smooth sword does not fret the sheath; it is that which is jagged, and irregular, and unsteady, which wears it prematurely out. And it is in this sense that this proverb has been appli-

cable to me. The heart within has, indeed, worn out the body which sheathes it; both are hastening to their ultimate decay.

Yes! I feel the germ of death within me; I feel that my days are numbered. I think much and deeply on the subjects to which this conviction gives rise; but the past still ever starts up in accusation against me, and drives the future from my thoughts. She, for whom my love was greater than all the affections of my life put together,—she went down to her grave with all the consolations which arise from unvarying rectitude of conduct, and the habit of religious thought. It is true that she was snatched away in the fulness of youth, and on the eve of the crowning of an attachment of years, after an obstacle, apparently insurmountable, had been, for years, opposed to it. Her death, also, was of a violent and appalling nature;



but still she was virtuous, and she was religious; and *this* assuredly is sufficient to render the flitting of the spirit calmer, even amidst all the horrors of shipwreck, than that of the unrighteous can be with every aid and preparation.

For me, my past life presents a long record of accusing deeds, of the real blackness of which I never have been fully conscious till now. And for religion—what has such a wretch as I to do with religion? Prayers? they would come polluted from my lips! Penitence? Alas! *my* penitence is heart-wringing and tumultuous remorse. That deep, calm, and holy feeling which repentance, in its true sense, brings to the heart, I can never know. That humble, and yet assured, hope with which religion rewards its votaries, is beyond my sinful reach. My reason will not let me find refuge in the wild

and impious fantasies of fanatical enthusiasts. It is too stern to let me think that offences like mine can be wiped away at once by a simple 'Credo.' And the aspirations of the really pious followers of a purer faith, these, alas! are denied to a soul which yet needs so much purification as mine.

Yes! it still clings tenaciously to the world:—it still shrinks from launching itself into that vast ocean of Eternity, of which the shores are so unknown. To which of its shores, indeed, should I be wafted? That is a question from the contemplation of which I recoil; I need further preparation before I dare consider it!

My marriage has not been blessed with children: if I had had a son, I should have left him the legacy of a record of my life. I won't

ved it partly from the con-

temporary traces of it which I have preserved, partly from my recollections of the facts, in the light in which they appear to me now. On the day he entered the University, it should have been placed in his hands. If he had had the misfortune to have in his disposition the seeds of that bent which has worked the misery of his father's life, I know nothing so likely to check him, even at that period of youth, as the view of the fruits of those seeds in that father himself. But my marriage-bed has been barren: I have not been thought worthy of being blessed with children to surround and comfort me in the decline of life.

Oh! if that life were to be led again, how widely different it would be!—But this is the common-place and vain regret of every man who has misspent his time when he had

it, and then foolishly repines at its loss. I have lived a useless and an evil life; and now I reap my reward. As my strength decays, my gloomy feelings increase. I feel doubly the folly and the vanity of all the motives which misled me. Where is the high blood, now, which I used to plead to myself as an excuse? Where is the impetuosity of youthful feelings which, reciprocally gave to it, and received from it, aid? They are faded and gone:—they are faded and gone even before their time, by the lassitude following over-exertion, by the re-action succeeding over-excitement. Excitement?—To what a train of folly, vice, and guilt has not that one word led! ‘The want of excitement’ is the unmeaning plea with which we strive to deceive ourselves, by so miscalling the impulses of our own evil passions. This jargon of ‘excitement’ has done more harm

than almost the paradoxical sentimentalities of Rousseau, or the fantastic and maudlin enthusiasm of the modern Germans. The 'want of excitement' is a phrase ready pruned and rounded, wherewith to answer (ill-enough, but still to answer) the reproaches of our disgusted conscience. We all know the force of a trim and compact expression, when we wish to shut our eyes upon the reason of a case. The battle is half-gained when we have invented some such as a preliminary answer to the objections of all comers. None ever was more generally adopted than this, and none from worse causes, or to worse ends. When I was degrading myself by low dissipation, and wasting my energies of body and mind in its pursuit, truly it was for the sake of excitement. When I was ruining myself at the gaming-table, this was excitement also!—

How can we be so simple, and so silly, as to
 be thus deceived by tricks of our own in-
 venting — I say, who can deny that they are
 a very bad

st

the

jargo.

EXTRACT XXVII.

“ Last stage of all.”

As you LIKE IT.

London, February, 1804.

MY DEAR FREWIN,—

My physicians have, at last, condescended to tell me the truth, and to announce to me a fact of which I have myself been aware for many months—namely, that my end is drawing near. I wish to see my old, and tried, and excellent friend before I die. I know that he will come to me at once. Dear Charles, we have known each other now upwards of twenty years; and, during all that time, all the advantages of friendship have been on my side. How often have you restrained my impetuosity, and preserved me

from its consequences ! how often have you assisted me in the hour of distress, and consoled me in that of sorrow ! For me, I have seldom, if at all, been able to return these services—for your life has been that of a wise and virtuous man. Would to God that mine had been so too !—Would to God that I had profited by your many warnings—that I had been guided by your excellent advice ! Oh, Frewin ! at a moment like this, when Death appears before us, imminent, inevitable, how poor, how paltry, how weak, do the motives which have led us into evil seem ? You, who are so blessed in your family ; who have so little of a painful nature to look back to ; you can scarcely conceive how bitter my thoughts have been since I have foreseen, and I have foreseen it long, that I was doomed to die an early death. I have, I trust, brought myself at last into a frame

of mind more suited to the great change I am about to undergo; but still, at times, the retrospect of the past raises up within me tumultuous and conflicting thoughts—passionate and agonizing remorse.

I have many things to say to you, dear Frewin, before I die, which I am too weak to write, and which, at all events, I would rather say in person. You know you are executor to my will—though, indeed, there is little to execute. I have thought it right to leave all I have to my wife. We were never suited to each other, but I have no other blame to impute to her; and I doubt not that for the little happiness in which we have lived together, I may have been to the full as much in fault as she has.

But I am exhausted with writing even this short letter. I will keep the rest of what I have to say till we meet. It is sad


to think that this is the last time I shall ever address you!—you have been to me the best of friends, and my heart expands towards you with gratitude, with its last pulsations. God bless you, my dear friend!

[Letter from Mr. Frewin to Lady Katharine Frewin.]

London, February 1804.

MY DEAREST KATHARINE;—

It is all over. My poor friend breathed his last, at a little after nine o'clock, last night. It is, indeed, a consolation to me that I have been able to be with him during the last days of his life, for I feel that my presence soothed and supported him during that awful period. To any one, indeed, the approach of death must be a period of awe;



but Blount, you know, had many causes of painful feeling, which would tend to increase that sensation in him. And they did so to a great degree. He exclaimed repeatedly, "What a fool have I been!" He lamented, now, the waste of those powers and advantages with which he was so eminently gifted, and of which he never could be persuaded to make a corresponding use. He spoke of Antonia, and by her name; the first time I have heard him pronounce it since he looked upon her as she lay a corpse. But she seems to have had constant and strong hold upon his heart; for, during a perturbed sleep, when I was sitting by his side, he called upon her name, in varied tones of fond affection, of sorrow, and of despair. I was glad that Mrs. Blount was not present; but I kept her as much out of the room as possible; and the task was the less difficult,

for, though she evidently wished to do every thing which was proper and decent, there was none of that overflowing and devoted affection which it is so difficult, nay so impossible, to controul upon such occasions. Blount has behaved very rightly and handsomely with respect to her. Feeling that he had derived all the fortune of his later life from her, he has left her the whole of his personalty, every thing, indeed, which he had to leave, with the exception of a few tokens of remembrance to friends. Doddridge, you know, goes to his cousin. He has left to you the drawing of the house at Lucerno,* “in testimony of his grateful remembrance of your intended kindness towards her whose habitation it was.” You can scarcely imagine, dear Kate, how vividly this remained in his memory.

* That mentioned, p. 131.—Ed.

I must remain here yet some days, to make the arrangements necessary at such a moment; but I long to get back to you, after the painful time I have been passing. It is, indeed, a trying and afflicting thing to witness the death of the oldest friend we have in the world; of one with whom we have been in habits of constant intercourse for so many years, that it almost seems a necessary part of our existence. What I have witnessed here, has, I will own, shaken me considerably. Poor Blount had many faults, it is true, but he had also many noble and excellent qualities, strong powers of mind, and the warmest feelings of friendship. He had of late years become depressed and soured, partly from the loss of the woman he loved; and partly from having married one whom he did not love. He had, also, I believe, feelings of self-accusa-

tion constantly gnawing at his heart ; which were little guessed by the world, but which, like the hair-shirt of a Catholic penitent, secretly preyed upon and galled him. You know sufficient of the story of Antonia, to guess whence these might arise ; and there were others similar in nature, though less in degree. Poor, poor fellow ! my tears spring to my eyes, as I reflect that he, who was so animated, so full of fire and of life, lies a cold corpse, in the next room ! Well, at the least, I held his dear old friendly hand, as he breathed his last—and closed his eyes when he was no more. “ God bless you, Frewin ! ” were the last words he spoke, with the exception of that which fluttered in his last sigh, and *that* was—
“ Antonia ! ”

POSTSCRIPT BY THE EDITOR.

BEFORE the reader lays down the book, I wish to say a few words concerning the principle by which I have been guided in my selections from Mr. Blount's papers. I was, at one time, tempted, for the sake of increased effect, to put into immediate succession and opposition to each other, such parts of the Manuscripts as might relate to the same person, at whatever distance of time they might respectively have been written. But I afterwards preferred, as being both a more natural and a more clear arrangement, to leave such parts as I did select in their regular order of date, that the progression of the writer's mind and feelings

might be presented, as unconsciously depicted by himself.

If the reader have viewed this progression in the same light that it has appeared to me, a not unprofitable lesson, may, I think, be drawn from it. Mr. Blount, I take originally to have been a man of warm and upright feelings, as well as of considerable ardour of disposition. But he caused his own misery, and that of her who loved and trusted him, by that most pernicious and enervating bent of mind with regard to women, for which, thank Heaven! our language wants an expression; I mean, that common to men whom our neighbours term *à bonnes fortunes*. The increasing action of this corroding influence is, I think, very apparent in the gradual change of tone, throughout the course of these papers. He begins by talking of these matters with gaiety and

buoyant animal spirits. He resolutely shuts his eyes against every thing which he feels it disagreeable to look upon ; he seeks only present enjoyment, and he finds it. After further self-indulgence, we find him more difficult to be excited, and occasionally looking back with tenderness and regret to the happiness which he has thrown away. Neither does he any longer possess that flow of spirits, which is the surest shield against suffering from the agitations of the stronger passions. Ultimately his heart becomes corrupt, and his life loose, even to licentiousness. He plunges into dissipation to shake off the thorns which the flowers of indulgence have left within his heart ; and he only doubles their number. He becomes soured in temper, and discontented in his habits of thought. The present has for him no joys, the future no hopes ; the past he dares not look at. At length,

from fortuitous circumstances, a second dawn breaks and brightens upon him ; a happiness, he has not deserved, is placed almost within his reach, when a circumstance, equally fortuitous, snatches it from him for ever !

What store of mental comfort and consolation has he then to turn to ? What feelings has he hived up to support him in sorrow or adversity ? Alas ! none ; his life becomes one dreary gloom ; there is no bright spot to alleviate or adorn it.

Such a man as this cannot bear solitude ; he rushes again into the world, and seeks means of driving away reflection more desperate even than those he formerly employed. These ruin his fortune, as those had corrupted his heart ; and he sells himself in a mercenary marriage, which completes the climax of his misfortunes caused by faults. And what is the result ? He drags

on two or three miserable years, and sinks into an early grave, alike morally and physically worn out. He dies of old age at nine-and-thirty.

Such is the outline, as it has appeared to me, of the life of a man of the description I have named. Is the picture one, which we should wish to be a likeness of ourselves? I think there cannot be two opinions on the subject.

Reader, if the bent of your disposition be inclining you to the course of which you have just seen the consequence, pause a moment on your way, and ask yourself this question:—"How shall I think on these subjects by the time I am forty?"

THE END.

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